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THE SELF-PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPALS'
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

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BA, Hamilton College, 2004
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A Dissertation
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education in Instructional Leadership
in the
Department of Education and Educational Psychology
at
Western Connecticut State University
2018

THE SELF-PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPALS'
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

Stephanie M. Metz

Western Connecticut State University

ABSTRACT

This research focused on the transformational leadership traits of principal participants from a sample bound within the geographic regions of Westchester County, New York and Fairfield County, Connecticut. The mixed methods case study utilized three different instruments to gather data from principal participants. Using the online program SurveyMonkey to distribute the Phase 1 instruments, the researcher-created demographic questions were administered first to each participant. Upon completion of the demographic questions online, the participants proceeded to complete the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI). The survey results were analyzed descriptively, including mean and standard deviation. Using a sample of convenience, participants were selected to participate in Phase 2 of data collection to develop a deeper understanding of the case study of the phenomenon of transformational leadership. Twenty-eight individual qualitative interviews were conducted with principal participants to gain further insight into the phenomenon.

At the completion of Phase 2 qualitative data collection, qualitative data analysis occurred. Inductive, emergent coding guided the researcher and three finding statements arose from the data analysis process. Three finding statements emerged from the data analysis process, with categories and sub-themes emerging from the participants' words and experiences. The first finding statement was that participant principals believe themselves to be, or were

transformational leaders. Three categories emerged from the participants, which included “Yes,” “No,” and “At Times and I try” categories. The second finding statement that emerged was that change was a central tenet to the participant principals’ interpretations of transformational leadership. Several themes emerged from the finding statement, including definition of transformational leadership, communication, collaboration, vision or big picture, transforming people, and self-perceptions. The third finding statement was that the intangible, human elements of leadership were a central tenet to the participant principals’ perceptions of transformational leadership. The first theme that emerged was communication, with sub-themes of acknowledgement, building relationships, listening, and value placed on communication. The second theme that emerged was model the behavior, with sub-themes of praise, visible or being open, leading people, self-perceptions, and vision. The third theme that emerged was relationship building, with sub-themes of acknowledgment, trust and respect, vision for the school and themselves, and self-perceptions.

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2018

APPROVAL PAGE



*School of Professional Studies
Department of Education and Educational Psychology
Doctor of Education in Instructional Leadership*

Doctor of Education Dissertation

THE SELF-PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPALS'
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many people I must acknowledge who have provided me with invaluable guidance and support on my doctoral journey. First, I want to thank my spectacular dissertation committee. Dr. Piro, Dr. Cosentino, and Dr. Nitowski gave their time and energy to my work, and I appreciate their unwavering support.

To the Harvey School community for allowing me to reach for the stars and achieve my dreams, thank you.

To my friends and family who have been patient with my pursuit over the last 5 years, and to Cohort 6 and the study sessions and support, the support was invaluable. My family has been a part of this journey, but I very proud and excited for it to be ending. I cannot thank you enough for your patience and love over the past 5 years.

To “Team Jody,” I would not have gotten through this without you. I cannot begin to thank you enough. Rich and Erik, we have seen this through since the proposal phase, and I could not have made it this far if you were not there to help and listen.

To Jody! I cannot find enough words to begin to thank you for all you have done. You always knew when to push, be disappointed, step back, and step in. It has been great getting to know you over the past several years and your patience and support has been unwavering and invaluable. Thank you!

DEDICATION

I dedicate my dissertation to three extremely important people. First, I dedicate it to my father Robert Metz. You have always supported me and pushed me to be the very best person possible. I have relied on your patience and guidance, and you have always been there for me in all I do. You made me strive to play like a champion in all aspects of life, and I thank you for your support in my doctoral journey. Thank you for being the best coach, math helper, teacher, friend, and father anyone could ever ask for. I love you dad!

Secondly, to my mother Francine, you left this world too soon, and I hope you are smiling down bursting with pride. As a child, you gave me the foundation to do my homework and to ask for help if I needed it. You helped me write my first term papers in Middle School and guided me to think critically. I know you are proud and provided divine intervention at points so that I could get this done.

Finally, to my best friend Douglas Plaskett, 6 years ago I said to you that I was thinking about going back to earn a second Master's degree. Without skipping a beat, you told me to just go get a doctorate. Your never-ending encouragement and support for my pursuits has been invaluable as I completed my doctoral program. You constantly reminded me to try to keep a balance in life and always listened to me, even when you would have rather been doing anything else. Thank you for knowing when to give me a push, when to leave me alone, and when to make me a snack. There will never be enough words to thank you. I love you!

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

In the world of education, there has been a focus on the role leadership plays in American schools remaining competitive in the global environment (Stein, 2016). Principals continue to navigate the changes occurring in schools and research has been conducted to examine the work of school principals globally (Moosung, 2016). Leone, Warnimont, and Zimmerman (2009) described the role of the principal as being an “active change agent within the school” (p. 92). As a result, the skills and abilities of school leadership will continue to shift (Leone et al., 2009). In addition, the diverse elements of the changing role for school principals means that the “basic job description can no longer be used to identify all the possible job responsibilities needed to be an effective leader in a school setting” (Leone et al., 2009, p. 92). Stein’s (2016) review of school leadership pointed to the fact that there is growing support for “leadership through collegiality and collaboration rather than the older hierarchical models that place one decision-maker at the top of the pyramid” (p. 23).

The role of the school principal must adapt to be responsive to the needs of teachers and the school principal plays a role in teachers’ perceptions of their own self-efficacy (Kass, 2013). Principals can begin to do this by “being supportive of teachers, listening to them, and being responsive to what they are saying” (Leone et al., 2009, p. 90). Teachers employed in schools where principals act as transformational leaders tend to express higher levels of satisfaction and stay in their jobs for longer periods of time (Kass, 2013).

As it relates to school leadership, transformational leadership has been reviewed as a factor of school success less frequently than other theories of school leadership. Anderson (2017) reviewed literature on transformational leadership and highlighted the changing landscape of principals’ roles in schools today. Anderson’s work positively highlighted the need for

educational leaders to focus on principals' transformational leadership traits as the literature reviewed found support for principals to embrace this style of leadership in their school settings. Velasco, Edmonson, and Slate's (2012) review of literature on the behaviors and traits of principals highlighted transformational leadership as one style of leadership used within school settings. Velasco et al. (2012) stated, "Transformational leaders focused on the performance of their followers. Transformational leaders want each follower to accomplish his maximum potential" (p. 324). Stein (2016) made the statement that "in order to become more competitive with their global counter parts American schools need to be led rather than managed" (p. 21). Stein recommended several steps for school principals to enact based on the review of the literature in order to follow the shift from manager to leader, including recommending that principals create a positive school culture and serve as change agents in their school buildings. Stein also recommended that greater steps should be taken when preparing to identify and support successful school leaders.

Rationale for Selecting the Topic

Principals who are tasked to lead schools must work to balance the needs of many stakeholders while maintaining the instructional balance within their building. There is a need for school leaders to continue to focus on the principals' leadership traits within their school buildings (Anderson, 2017). With a strong emphasis recently placed on the instructional knowledge of principals, less emphasis has been designated towards the transformational leadership capacities of school principals that add to the emphasis on collaboration, cooperation, and ability to implement change (Hauserman & Stick, 2013). The purpose of this study was to examine school principals' views of their own transformational leadership practices.

Statement of the Problem

With the changing global landscape of schools, educational leadership in the United States has also had to adapt to the emerging changes (Moosung, 2016). The role of the school principal is the “single most important factor in school effectiveness” (Hauserman & Stick, 2013, p. 190). Anderson (2017) reviewed existing literature of transformational leadership in education and highlighted the continuing need for school leaders, and the field of education, to incorporate transformational leadership practices into principals’ daily routines. Transformational leadership styles had a positive effect on job areas such as teacher commitment, motivation, and job satisfaction (Anderson, 2017). In working to meet stakeholder demands, transformational leadership was seen as an approach that school leaders should implement in transforming schools (Anderson, 2017). This research study further analyzed the transformational leadership perceptions of current school leaders within the bound parameters of the case study design.

Potential Benefits of the Research

The researcher investigated the transformational leadership practices of principal participants to understand the phenomenon of transformational leadership within the setting of educational leadership. Three different data collection sources triangulated participant responses for a thorough understanding of transformational leadership from the principal participants. This research may assist current and aspiring principals to improve and develop their transformational leadership capacity to lead more effective schools. Additionally, the research may assist current and aspiring principals to understand the effect that embracing transformational leadership traits within their schools might have on building a positive school culture for the entire community.

Definition of Key Terms

The following terms were used to guide the research study.

1. **Case Study** is a type of research design. For example, “an instrumental case design is one where the case serves to help us understand the phenomena or relationships within it...” (Stake, 1995, p. 77).
2. **Challenge the Process** is a concept that focuses on opportunities. As Kouzes and Posner (2012), leaders must “search for opportunities by seizing the initiative and by looking outward for innovative ways to improve” and “constantly generating small wins and learning from experience” (p. 20).
3. **Enable Others to Act** is a concept about building relationship. As Kouzes and Posner (2012), leaders must “foster collaboration by building trust and facilitating relationships” (p. 21) and “strengthen(ing) others by increasing self-determination and developing competence” (p. 22).
4. **Encourage the Heart** is a concept that focuses on the individual. As Kouzes and Posner (2012) stated, leaders must “recognize contributions by showing appreciation for individual excellence” (p. 23) and “celebrating the values and victories by creating a spirit of community” (p. 24).
5. **Five Leadership Pillars** was created by Kouzes and Posner (2012). They created the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI; Kouzes & Posner, 2013) from their work on the *Leadership Challenge*. The theoretical foundation of this work is the question “What did you do when you were at your personal best as a leader?” (Kouzes & Posner, 2012, p. 2). The responses have been divided into five categories that represent the Five Pillars of Exemplary Leadership, which their survey is built upon. The pillars

include model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. The definitions framed the foundation of the five pillars. Kouzes and Posner (2012) have found that leaders who utilize the five exemplary leadership practices are more effective than when the traits are used infrequently.

6. **Inspire a Shared Vision** is a concept based on influence. As Kouzes and Posner (2012) stated, leaders must “envision the future by imagining exciting and ennobling possibilities” and “enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations” (p. 18).
7. **Intangible Leadership Elements** involve the non-instructional elements of school leadership that affect the community and environment. In this study, these are founded from Kouzes and Posner’s (2012) Five Pillars of Exemplary Leadership (Model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart) with respect to the perceived actions that help develop these traits.
8. **Model the Way** is a leader driven concept. As Kouzes and Posner (2012) stated, leaders must “clarify values by finding their (your) voice” (p. 16), “affirm the shared values of the group,” and “set the example by aligning actions with shared values” (p. 17).
9. **Phenomenon** involves “the processes, events, persons, or things of interest to the researcher” (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003, p. 436). For the purposes of the study, transformational leadership is the phenomenon of interest.

10. **Principals** are the people responsible in a school building to “...implement state educational policy to the school and to maneuver, buffer, and maintain the stability of the school culture at the local level” (Rousmaniere, 2013, p. 3) or “the person in charge of a public school” (Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary, n.d., Principal definition). The term “division head” is used as an interchangeable synonym for “principal” throughout the study. The difference in role is that a division head is in charge of a private or independent school division.
11. **Transformational Leadership** is “The ability to get people to want to change, improve, and be led” and “involves assessing associates’ motives, satisfying their needs, (and) valuing them” (Balyer, 2012, p. 581).

Methodology Overview

Setting and Subjects

The mixed methods case study was used to explore the phenomenon of transformational leadership and consisted of participants who identified as school principals within the counties of Fairfield, Connecticut and Westchester, New York. The initial sample was gathered from the National Council of Education Statistics and 600 potential participants were identified for Phase 1 of the research study. Through the online platform of SurveyMonkey, participants were sent the first two instruments to complete online: a demographic questionnaire and the LPI (Kouzes & Posner, 2013). The survey contained 42 questions spanning three pages. The first page of the survey asked for participant consent, and a typed response was required of each participant before moving on to the demographic survey questions. The survey was sent multiple times to potential participants, and 113 participants responded to the request. A total of 101 participants fully completed the survey for Phase 1 of the research. The 42nd question asked if participants

would like to volunteer to take part in Phase 2 of the research study. Each participant who responded “Yes” was contacted to schedule a follow-up qualitative interview. The qualitative interview phase was a sample of convenience, and 28 total participants were interviewed to complete Phase 2 of the research study.

Instrumentation

Three different instruments were used in the research study. The first instrument was a researcher created demographic survey. Participants completed 10 researcher created demographic questions followed by completing the LPI (Kouzes & Posner, 2013). Both instruments were completed online using the SurveyMonkey platform. The second phase of data collection involved participants contributing their responses in individual semi-structured interviews with researcher created questions.

Leadership Demographic

Upon typing in their name on the first page consent form, participants completed 10 demographic questions. Six of the 10 questions were drop down or multiple-choice responses. Four questions required participants to type in responses. The demographic questions allowed the researcher to identify the school level participants were currently leaders. In addition, questions asked whether participants were from a private or public school, and asked how long participants had been in the field of education and in their current role as school principal. Upon completion of the 10 demographic questions, participants continued to the next page to complete the LPI.

Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)

Participants completed the LPI (Kouzes & Posner, 2013) as the second portion of the quantitative data collection. The questions were typed into SurveyMonkey by the researcher and

a drop down menu including the numbers 1-10 was included underneath each question. The number one indicated a behavior or trait that participants almost never engaged in, while the number 10 indicated a behavior or trait that participants almost always exhibited. Participants completed the responses on one page, and were free to move back and forth between questions during the completion of the instrument. The 42nd question asked if participants were willing to volunteer to participate in Phase 2 of the research study, which was a researcher created question.

Qualitative Interview

Participants were queried to volunteer to participate in Phase 2 of the research study in the last question of the SurveyMonkey online response. Each participant who responded with the answer “Yes” was contacted through email by the researcher to schedule an individual follow-up interview. This became a sample of convenience, as every participant who responded with a “Yes” reply was contacted by the researcher ($n = 28$) to participate in Phase 2 of the study. The researcher completed 28 individual interviews with participants who agreed to meet. As part of the scheduling process, the researcher sent each participant a superintendent consent form. Each superintendent signed the consent form prior to the researcher’s arrival. One participant chose to meet at a mutually agreed on public place, and therefore did not require the superintendent consent. Upon arrival at the participant’s school office, the researcher had each participant sign a final consent form acknowledging their participation in Phase 2 of the research study.

The researcher created a set of interview questions to follow for each interview. The set of questions was printed out and used to take notes during each interview. The questions remained consistent between interviews and the researcher asked most participants all interview

questions. The interviews lasted between 30 and 45 minutes each. The researcher gained the verbal consent of each participant to record the interview prior to asking the first question, and used an external recording device to record each interview.

The interview questions informed the content of the Five Pillars of Exemplary Leadership that compose the framework of the LPI survey. The researcher modeled the interview questions from the Five Pillars of Exemplary Leadership, ensuring that at least one question encompassing each pillar was asked during the interviews. Upon completion of each interview, the researcher saved and stored the recording on the researcher's computer. Each audio file was sent to the website [transcribe.com](https://www.transcribe.com) for transcription.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the research study.

Research Question: How did building level leader participants understand their perceptions of transformational leadership?

Sub-Research Question #1: What were building level leader participants' perceptions of their leadership practices based on their LPI survey responses?

Sub-Research Question #2: How were Kouzes and Posner's Five Pillars of Exemplary Leadership part of those perceptions?

Design and Analysis

The research design was a mixed methods case study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The case was bound by the phenomenon of transformational leadership that included participants who identified as school principals within the counties of Fairfield, Connecticut and Westchester, New York. The quantitative data were analyzed through SPSS statistical software, and the

qualitative data were coded inductively. This allowed themes to emerge from the interview data, informed by transformational leadership literature.

Chapter Summary

As the world continues to grow and change, emphasis has been placed on how schools work to prepare students of all ages for an ever-changing global society (Moosung, 2016). In working to meet stakeholder demands, transformational leadership was seen as an approach that school leaders should implement in transforming schools (Anderson, 2017). The mixed methods case study incorporated three different instruments and included two phases of data collection. Statistical software, specifically SPSS Version 22 (SPSS, 2013), was used to analyze the quantitative data. Inductive, emergent coding, as well as codes related to the literature, were used to analyze the qualitative interview information. The following chapter involves a discussion of the related literature used to ground the findings of the research study.

CHAPTER TWO: RELATED LITERATURE

The following review of the literature highlighted transformational leadership as an integral element of leadership, particularly for school principals to remain effective in their ever-changing roles. The researcher examined both qualitative and quantitative research studies for the literature review. In addition, theoretical articles were included to inform the inquiry into transformational leadership as a construct of leadership.

Literature Review Process

The review of the literature began with a subject keyword search limited to peer reviewed articles published after 2008 within EBSCO combined databases from the Western Connecticut online database. The initial keywords searched with the total number of results are displayed in Figure 1. Variations on the keywords and related subject keywords were explored. For example, in replacement of “school principals” the search included variations such as “educational leadership” or “principal’s role.” As part of the advanced search option, the terms “transformational leadership” and “school principals” were also combined with keywords related to specific findings from the research study, such as “trust and respect,” “communication,” “relationship building,” “leadership challenge,” “collaboration,” or “vision.”



Figure 1. Initial keywords searched and EBSCO results.

The researcher reviewed the titles and abstracts from the articles to determine the relevance to the findings of the current study. Of the eleven articles related to the *Leadership Challenge* and the LPI survey, four were used in the review of the literature. One article highlighted the LPI survey’s validity and reliability while the three others focused on school

principals' transformational leadership traits. The researcher repeated the advanced keyword search using the terms “transformational leadership” and “school principals” in combination with elements from the study that emerged from the findings. Refer to Figure 2.



Figure 2. Example of keywords search with leadership elements.

The final literature review for the study focused on the specific elements of transformational leadership and school principals in relation to the empirical evidence generated from prior research on the topic in the field of education. Due to the number of results generated from the EBSCO database, no additional search engines, such as Google Scholar, were used in the review of the literature. One additional source of literature came from the *Leadership Challenge* website run by the creators of the theory and subsequent survey platforms. One doctoral dissertation accessed from the website was used in the study that reviewed the LPI survey's use on teacher perceptions of principals' leadership practices.

The literature reviewed for the study focused on transformational leadership and its influence on school building principals. The studies in the following chapter highlight the effect transformational leadership has on organizations including the field of education. First is a section on transformational leadership. This section highlights elements that emerged from the study's findings, including how the “human” and “intangible” elements intersect with transformational leadership. A section of the literature review includes how transformational leadership affects the field of education. Subsets of transformational leadership include communication, trust and respect, and building a shared vision that emerged from the study's findings. In addition, elements of relationship building were included as a component of

transformational leadership within the field of education. Finally, Kouzes and Posner's (2012) *Leadership Challenge* was discussed with particular focus on the pillars of leadership and LPI as a survey instrument used within the field of education and with school change (Senge, 2006).

The figure below highlights an overview of the literature reviewed for the current research study.

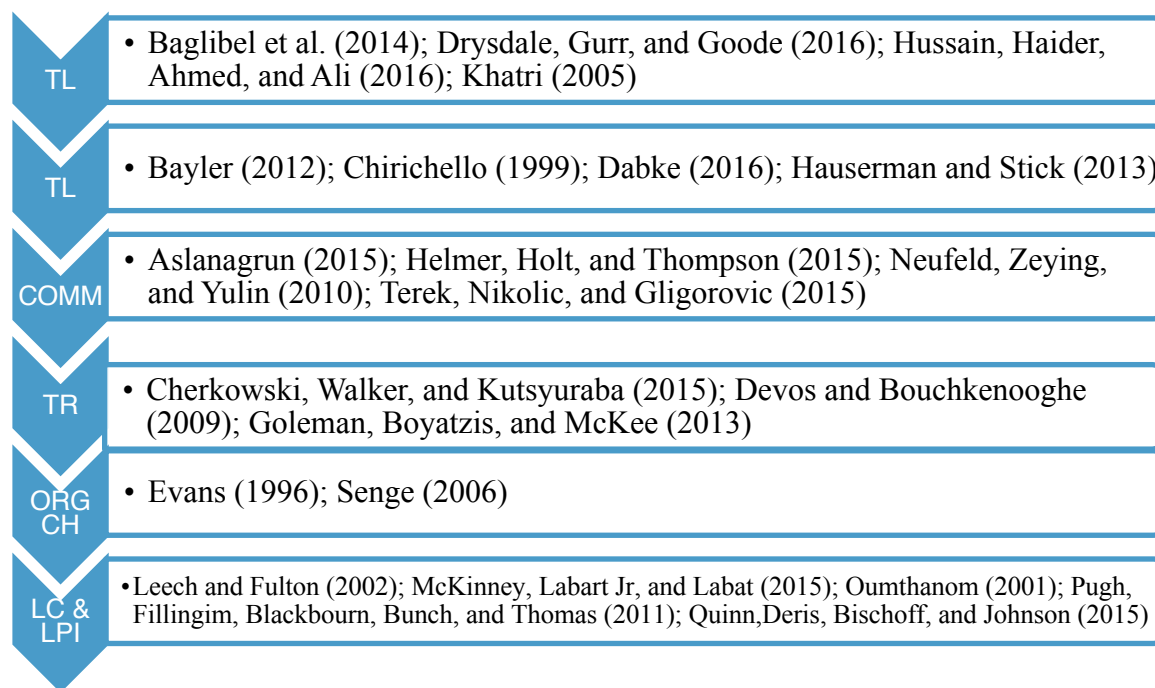


Figure 3. Overview of literature reviewed for the study. The following abbreviations have been used: TL=Transformational Leadership; COMM=Communication; TR=Trust and Respect; ORG CH=Change and Organizational Change; LC & LPI=Leadership Challenge and Leadership Practices Inventory.

Transformational Leadership

As a central tenet of leadership, transformational leadership was an important facet in the lives of school building leaders. Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) suggested that transformational leadership was having the ability to produce change, perhaps beyond one's expectations. This form of leadership was defined as a "convincing vision that draws in trust, commitment, and acceptance of the expected and needed change" (Velasco et al., 2012, p. 325).

By creating a dynamic presence within their building, principals implement the change they hope to see for their schools (Marzano et al., 2005). Kareem (2016) discussed the influence that transformational leadership styles have on an organization, including educational leaders' influence within their school buildings. Transformational leadership was also found to have a significant influence ($p < .05$) on learning organizations (Kareem, 2016). Drysdale et al. (2016) utilized a case study approach to analyze the data from the International Successful School Principalship Project (ISSPP) to address how principals contribute to their school's success. Three principals were participants within the case study from the original data, and findings suggested that the balance of management and leadership was important to their roles (Drysdale et al., 2016). Khatri (2005) proposed an alternative form of transformational leadership that placed more emphasis on the elements of charisma and vision as central components of the definition. Khatri placed charisma and vision as two overlooked key elements of an alternative form of transformational leadership.

Elements of change emerged from the studies (Baglibel et al., 2014; Hussain et al., 2016) found regarding transformational leadership. Baglibel et al. (2014) study examined teachers' perceptions of change with relationship to principals change facilitator styles. The study's findings indicated that participants work through change in their schools in a variety of different ways. Through their findings, teachers identified their principals as initiators, managers, and responders (Baglibel et al., 2014). Those teachers who perceived their principals as initiators were significantly more positive than those who perceived their principals as being responders or managers with higher mean scores ($M = 5.18$, $SD = .75$) than the manager or responder groups (Baglibel et al., 2014).

Using a quantitative research design, Hussain et al. (2016) measured the skills and attributes school principals identified as being critical to successful change with schools. The data were collected from the department of education and literacy in Sindh, and the survey was mailed to 240 principals within the city of Karachi. Seventy-eighty surveys were returned to the researcher, with forty-four males responding and 34 females responding (Hussain et al., 2016). The researchers had participants identify demographic information and the number of years of experience as a principal in their school. These researchers used the statistical methods of means, frequencies, and the Mann Whitney U Test for Ordinal Numbers to analyze the data (Hussain et al., 2016). The means for female participants identified skills of change (45.22) were higher than their male counterparts (35.08; Hussain et al., 2016).

Smylie, Murphy, and Louis (2016) reviewed and analyzed literature about the effect caring has in school leadership and incorporated literature from different professional occupations to guide their caring school leadership model. They found that to institute a model of caring school leadership in a school, the leaders' aims, mindset, and dispositions are at the forefront of implementation (Smylie et al., 2016). The element of caring emerged from the research findings as an aspect of transformational leadership as it intersects with building relationships between teachers and school principals. The following section highlights the effect transformational has in the field of education, in particular within the field of educational leadership and school principals.

The leadership style of school principals has played a role on teachers' perceptions of principals. Dabke (2016) researched the perceived transformational leadership behaviors effect on subordinates' performance using the MSCEIT v2.0 test and the MLQ 5X surveys on a sample of 200 senior level managers across a range of professional occupations. The data analysis used

a Pearson's Product moment correlation coefficient to find the association between the elements of transformational leadership, emotional intelligence, and leadership effectiveness of the study's participants (Dabke, 2016). The results indicated that there was a significant positive correlation ($p < .01$) between leaders and their subordinates perceived transformational leadership behaviors. This highlights the emphasis and importance of transformational leadership traits and the influence they have on the ability of leaders to work with their subordinates. Through an ethnographic qualitative research design, Bayler's (2012) participants were 30 teachers from Turkey who were interviewed using a semi-structured format. Bayler (2012) found that educational leaders who demonstrated transformational leadership in their buildings had more positive commitment overall from teachers and suggested that future thought be put towards including transformational leadership in principal training.

Principals find themselves at the forefront of change within schools. Onorato (2013) studied the leadership styles of school principals using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and the results found that transformational leadership was the most used style of leadership (68.9% of the sample population). Hauserman and Stick (2013) used the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire in their study to identify the perceived leadership qualities of a random sample of teachers from 135 public school principals in Alberta, Canada. The administration of the instrument led to the grouping of principals into two categories; those who demonstrated high and low transformational leadership (Hauserman & Stick, 2013). Following the stratification of the data from principals in the first phase, 10 teachers were selected to participate in in-depth interviews (Hauserman & Stick, 2013). At the completion of qualitative interviews, they found that teachers had detailed leadership examples from principals who were perceived as high in transformational leadership (Hauserman & Stick, 2013).

In his research study of school principals, Chirichello (1999) used a quantitative survey to gain an analysis of teacher perceptions of organizational climates found in successful public elementary schools in New Jersey (Chirichello, 1999). Six school principals were interviewed to identify their preferred leadership styles. Chirichello (1999) found that there was a tendency for principals to exhibit many transformational characteristics, and this led him to state that the preferred leadership style of the principals was transformational. The study further found that principal participants placed a value on building relationships as an important aspect of their roles as educational leaders.

In their mixed methods analysis of school principals, Spillane and Hunt's (2010) study utilized an experience-sampling log (ESM) along with two other questionnaires to measure how principals spent their daily time. The study began with data collection involving 52 principals and 2,400 other school personnel. In studying school principals, the study focused on the 42 principals who completed the ESM log (Spillane & Hunt, 2010). For the qualitative component of their study, additional interviews and observations were conducted. These researchers found that there were three different "clusters" of principals, the third of which was titled "people-oriented" (Spillane & Hunt, 2010). This group of principals was significantly different from the other two groups in the time they spent fostering relationships (Spillane & Hunt, 2010).

Mehdinezhad and Mansouri (2016) investigated the effect that principal leadership behaviors have on teachers' self-efficacy. Their study included all teachers in the city of Sabzevar City in Iran for 254 participants. Two questionnaires were distributed, and the findings indicated that there was a significant positive relationship between principals' leadership behaviors and teachers' sense of self-efficacy (Mehdinezhad & Mansouri, 2016).

In a study of school principals, Saĝnak (2010) investigated the relationship between transformational school leadership and school climate. A survey model with 764 elementary teachers was used to measure ethical climate types and transformational leadership dimensions in Nigde during the 2008-2009 school year. Two different instruments were used to measure transformational leadership and ethical school climate (Saĝnak, 2010). The data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, Pearson's product correlation coefficient, and simple regression techniques (Saĝnak, 2010). The researcher found that fostering group goals ($x = 3.99$) and caring ($x = 4.00$) earned the highest means (Saĝnak, 2010). The study revealed that transformational leadership was a significant predictor of ethical school climate (Saĝnak, 2010).

Green and Cooper (2012) conducted quantitative research to determine the dispositions and attributes of the most effective school leaders. During a conference of school leaders in July of 2012, the researchers presented an interactive session titled "Leadership Dispositions: Implications for Effective School Leadership" (p. 59). During the session, school leaders were asked to complete the survey titled "The Most Preferred Leader Behavior Scale" (p. 59). From the initial group of 150 school leaders, 123 were included in the study (Green & Cooper, 2012). The study involved three phases of data collection, beginning with a review of the effective school leader characteristics in the literature. This phase was followed by surveying school leaders to identify leadership characteristics and concluded with having school leaders rank the dispositions they most preferred (Green & Cooper, 2012). Upon completion of a review of the literature, the second phase of data collection asked participants attending a conference to identify the dispositions that they most preferred to observe as a school leader (Green & Cooper, 2012). From this list, frequencies were obtained and a third survey was administered to rank in order of importance the dispositions for being an effective school leader (Green & Cooper,

2012). The research study found that vision, integrity, character, ethics, communication, respect, and trust were all dispositions that were found to be of importance to be an effective school leader (Green & Cooper, 2012).

Male and female principals were examined to determine which gender exhibited more dispositions of emotional intelligence in a study conducted by Labby, Lunenburg, and Slate (2013). Principals from 157 schools took part in the study with an even distribution of male (78) and female (79) participants. The researchers used the instrument titled “Exploring & Developing Emotional Intelligence Skills: A Personal Guide to Lifelong Emotional Learning” to conduct their study via SurveyMonkey (Labby et al., 2013, p. 261). A MANOVA was performed on the data followed by an ANOVA (Labby et al., 2013). They found that females reported higher mean scores across all four aspects of emotional intelligence but that males and females differed in the following dimensions; comfort $F(1,155) = 6.52, p = .012$, partial eta squared = .04, empathy $F(1,155) = 5.78, p = .017$, partial eta squared = .036, leadership $F(1,155) = 9.42, p = .003$, partial eta squared = .057, and drive $F(1,155) = 6.84, p = .010$, partial eta squared = .042 (Labby et al., 2013).

A multiple case interview study was conducted to determine how principals’ ability to enact a visionary leadership affects student learning (Mombourquette, 2017) with 27 principals from K-12 schools in Alberta (Mombourquette, 2017). The researcher used a triangulation of three data sources, including the principals’ nomination by district superintendents, documents of school achievement data, and semi-structured interviews (Mombourquette, 2017). Participant principals suggested that they were guided by their own vision of education with an acknowledgment of keeping in mind the broader school community vision within their role

(Mombourquette, 2017). Additionally, principals spoke about establishing trusting relationships before implementing their vision with the school community (Mombourquette, 2017).

Communication

The theme of communication emerged as an aspect of leadership which participants felt affected their perceptions of transformational leadership. In a study comparing different types of leadership in the workplace, the element of physical proximity between leaders and followers was analyzed. In their research involving an initial sample of 784 MBA alumni, questionnaires were sent to 44 leaders who met the study's criteria and the leaders' 181 followers. The research focused on the follower data, and the data were tested using the Partial Leader Squares technique (Neufeld, Zeying, & Yulin, 2010). Neufeld et al. (2010) found a positive link between transformational leadership and communication effectiveness.

Terek et al. (2015) conducted a study to assess teachers in Serbia's perceptions of communication within their school buildings. Their research included three different questionnaires that asked for teacher participants' perceptions of transformational leadership and communication effectiveness within their schools (Terek et al., 2015). The results indicated that there was a statistically significant correlation ($p < .05$) between communication satisfaction and the dimensions of leadership among Serbian teachers (Terek et al., 2015). Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis, and hierarchical regression analysis were completed on the data to find whether the moderating effects of gender had an effect on teachers' perceptions of leadership and communication from school leaders (Terek et al., 2015). Teachers from the study perceived that positive communication was correlated with transformational leadership attributes, and in turn, that school principals should continue to work on developing strong communication traits within their buildings.

The communication traits of school principals intersect with various aspects of school leadership and has been shown to affect the overall school climate (Helmer et al., 2015). The study investigated the effect principals' communication had on teachers' perceptions of the school climate. The participants of the study were female teachers from 13 schools in Texas who were administered two electronic surveys consisting of 74 questions. Participants were from 13 elementary schools and the sample included 124 participants (Helmer et al., 2015). The quantitative non-experimental study design used a survey of close-ended 4-point Likert scale questions. The results of the study found that principals' communication with teachers plays a significant role in the overall success of the school. In particular, the ways in which a principal communicates with his or her staff members was related to the teachers' perceptions of morale in the study (Helmer et al., 2015).

Aslanagun (2015) conducted a qualitative phenomenological study investigating what teachers expect from school administration in order to conduct their jobs effectively. Volunteer teacher-participants ($n = 677$) in a province in Turkey completed open-ended questions (Aslanagun, 2015). The responses were analyzed using the four stages described by Marshall and Rossman (1999) and the analysis aimed at connecting coded categories into central themes (Aslanagun, 2015). The study found that 11% of the respondents brought the value of communication as an element of leadership teachers expect from their school leaders (Aslanagun, 2015). The study also found that the top three expectations teachers look for from principals are comprehension and support (25%), satisfaction (21%), and leadership (13%; Aslanagun, 2015). Teachers have valued communication from school leaders to develop positive school climate and as an element of leadership that allowed their jobs to be completed effectively on a daily basis.

Trust and Respect

The aspects of trust and respect emerged from the study's findings as elements of transformational leadership that principals identified as being central to their role as school leaders. In their study on principal's perceptions of their role as school leaders, Devos and Bouckennooghe (2009) used a case study methodology to explore their practices and experiences with school leadership. From their sample of 56 school principals, their descriptive statistical analysis of the quantitative questionnaire data identified three different profiles of school principals (Devos & Bouckennooghe, 2009). Case A of their findings profiled "people-minded" principals who were categorized as people who kept in mind their interactions with teachers, the implementation of an all school vision, and participants who preferred their role as educational leaders (Devos & Bouckennooghe, 2009).

The review of the literature found studies that linked transformational leadership with elements of morals and ethics (Cherkowski et al., 2015). In their exploratory study of Canadian school principals, Cherkowski et al. (2015) used questionnaires to measure principals' understanding of their decision making regarding the processes they use. Although their response rate was lower than anticipated, the research study found that principals who participated were concerned with elements of respect, care, and compassion and that respect and trust were both "paramount" to their ethical decision making (Cherkowski et al., 2015). As the elements of morals and ethics are intangible elements that are hard to quantify in school leadership, further research into aspects of transformational leadership would help to highlight positive intangible leadership elements. The following section describes the theoretical foundation for the research study centering on Kouzes and Posner's (2012) *Leadership*

Challenge and LPI (Kouzes & Posner, 2013) survey as both intersect with educational leadership.

The human elements of leadership emerged from a review of the literature, and the “how” of effective leadership was tied to the emotions behind effective leadership (Goleman et al., 2013). Leaders are tasked with driving and managing the emotions of their constituents and of themselves in order to move forward in a positive organizational direction (Goleman et al., 2013). One of the elements of advantageous leadership was found in leaders’ development of their own emotional intelligence in order to lead constituents in the right direction (Goleman et al., 2013). One trait of the development of emotional intelligence was the ability of leaders to be aware of their own actions and emotions on the organizations they lead (Goleman et al., 2013). Leaders who were self-reflective and thoughtful in their interactions and skill development were able to act with confidence and conviction while remaining self-aware of their individual effect on the people they lead (Goleman et al., 2013). Emotional intelligence competencies are broken into two realms: personal competence and social competence (Goleman et al., 2013). A person’s personal competence encompasses his or her own self-awareness and self-management; a person’s social competence encompasses their social awareness and relationship management (Goleman et al., 2013). The traits surrounding the elements of competence are learned abilities, and when utilized in combination help leaders to comprehend the facets of emotional intelligence towards more effective leadership abilities (Goleman et al., 2013). Successful leaders incorporate elements of each of the four competence areas as elements of their leadership styles as emotionally intelligent organizational leaders (Goleman et al., 2013). The intangible leadership elements of school principal participants in the current study involved elements of

emotional intelligence as traits that are utilized by principal participants' in order to lead their constituents.

Kouzes and Posner's (2012) Leadership Challenge and LPI Survey (2013)

The LPI Survey (Kouzes & Posner, 2013) administered as a portion of the data collection for the study was grounded in Kouzes and Posner's (2012) the *Leadership Challenge*. Their work focused on the Five Pillars of Exemplary Leadership (model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart), that both authors suggested make leaders more credible (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Kouzes and Posner highlighted the need for a clear vision, shared values, and credibility on the part of organizational leadership teams in order for progress to be made. They determined that these factors are necessary for leadership teams to enact a positive difference in the lives of organizations.

From their work with the *Leadership Challenge*, the LPI survey was developed. The inventory was developed to investigate a 360-degree view of organizational leadership through the administration of an observer form and self-form. To gain a perspective of the leadership practices within an organization, the observer and self-forms are compared to measure a leader's self-perceptions in comparison with the observers, or colleagues, the with whom the leader works. The self-form was used as the instrument in the following researcher created dissertation without the incorporation of the observer feedback.

The LPI survey has been utilized to measure the leadership practices in many different fields and studies have been conducted comparing the self and observer participant responses (McKinney et al., 2015; Oumthanom, 2001; Pugh et al., 2011). Both forms of the survey have been combined to form a 360-degree leadership feedback regarding transformational leadership practices, and within the field of education.

One study conducted compared the results of the LPI survey among faculty members and principals ($n = 386$) with 121 males and 265 females in the faculty group and seven males and four females included in the principal group (Pugh et al., 2011). The study was conducted in the spring of 2009 of 11 secondary schools in northeast Mississippi (Pugh et al., 2011). The data were analyzed using a Pearson product moment correlation coefficient, and the scores of principals were compared with those of the teachers across the dimensions of the LPI (Pugh et al., 2011). Each principal who participated in the study earned a total score and subscale scores were found for each of the five pillars of the LPI (Pugh et al., 2011). Correlation coefficients were calculated by comparing the principals' scores with the perceptions of the teachers' survey results (Pugh et al., 2011). The findings indicated a high positive correlation between faculty perceptions of principals and principal behaviors on all five pillars of the LPI survey (Challenge the Process .87, Inspire a Shared Vision .89, Enabling Others to Act .96, Modeling the Way .83, Encouraging the Heart .90, and Composite .88; Pugh et al., 2011).

A study of National Blue Ribbon Schools identified the professional and personal strategies that principals of nationally recognized schools utilize (McKinney et al., 2015). Conducted in a southern state, the LPI was administered to approximately 500 teachers and approximately 20 administrators among blue ribbon schools of Mississippi Gulf Coast schools. The data analysis used was a multiple regression. The study found that a significant correlation existed among the five leadership pillars measured on the LPI and the rapport among teachers, while the “enabling others to act” and “encouraging the heart” pillars have a significant correlation ($F(5, 257) = 237.164, p < .001$) with teacher rapport and the principal (McKinney et al., 2015).

Oumthanom's (2001) quantitative dissertation research highlighted the use of the LPI to compare the leadership perceptions of elementary school principals ($n = 98$) with teachers' observations ($n = 785$) of their leaders in Thailand. Descriptive and factor analyses were performed on the survey data. Means, range of scores, standard deviations, and percentage means for each subscale of the LPI were reported (Oumthanom, 2001). Oumthanom (2001) found that the mean scores ($p < .05$; Adjusted $R^2 = .03$, $F(1,94) = 4.11$, $p = .05$) for principals were higher than teachers' mean scores as they relate to the leadership practices of principals.

Quinn et al. (2015) utilized the LPI survey to measure teacher's perceptions of the leadership practices of school principals. Collected from 10 school districts in southwest Mississippi during the 2011-2012 school year, a total of 92 teachers participated by completing the LPI survey (Quinn et al., 2015). A set of tests were used to measure the differences in the leadership practices of principals in high and low performing schools (Quinn et al., 2015). For the pillar model the way ($t(90) = 2.81$, $p = .006$), inspire a shared vision ($t(90) = 3.67$, $p < .001$), challenge the process ($t(90) = 4.04$, $p < .001$), enable others to act ($t(90) = 3.19$, $p = .002$), and encourage the heart ($t(90) = 3.62$, $p < .001$) (Quinn et al., 2015). The findings of the study indicated that there were significant differences within the five leadership practices for high and low performing school principals (Quinn et al., 2015).

The LPI survey (observer) form was used to measure middle and high school teachers' perceptions of their educational school leaders through the lens of Kouzes and Posner's *Leadership Challenge* (Leech & Fulton, 2002). The population was school principals in a large urban school district where the principal had more than two years of tenure (Leech & Fulton, 2002). The sample totaled 646 participants, and tests and descriptive means were used to analyze the survey data. The results of the study found that there were no significant differences

between middle and high school teacher perceptions of principals (Leech & Fulton, 2002). From the review of the literature, the LPI survey has been effectively utilized across different school settings to measure the leadership traits of school leaders. No studies were found that exclusively utilized the LPI self-form for school principals to gain insight into their perceptions of how often they exemplify transformational leadership traits.

Organizational Change and School Change

The literature review also focused on organizational change and the role a leader plays in making change happen. Human endeavors and interactions are the work of complex systems that are “bound by invisible fabrics of interrelated actions” (Senge, 2006, p. 7) that have effects on the interworking of humans involved in the system. Systems thinking has evolved over time to attempt to make the patterns of relationships within an organizational system clearer in order to manage the change process more effectively (Senge, 2006). An element of systems thinking includes the focus on building a shared vision in order to establish a clear focus of organizational structure and change (Senge, 2006). Within the framework, a common identity emerges when people within an organization are bound by a common identity focused on a shared vision (Senge, 2006). Systems thinking also incorporates an understanding of the way individuals within an organization perceive their world and, within the change process, how individuals shift their views of reality (Senge, 2006). Finally, the development of learning organizations allows work environments to continually develop an identity for the future (Senge, 2006).

The leaders of learning organizations are the members of the workplace primarily responsible for enacting and implementing change within the organization. Within the context of schools, administrators, in particular school principals, are viewed as the people who must change first when innovation begins before turning to their faculty to focus on the same goal

(Evans, 1996). In educational settings where change is successful, school principals are seen as “true Renaissance people: they do everything well” (Evans, 1996, p. 202). Unfortunately, many school principals have not been trained in leading change (Evans, 1996). In addition, the role of the school principal involves maintaining positive relationships with both superiors and subordinates in order to maintain positive connections with all school stakeholders (Evans, 1996). It is important to allow school administrative leaders, and teams, the time to work through organizational change to clearly develop a strategic vision to convey to all school constituents (Evans, 1996).

Conclusion

School leadership responsibilities have exceeded a leader’s responsibility to oversee the curricular and instructional progress in schools. The literature reviewed for the research study highlights the importance school principals place on transformational leadership and the effects this leadership style has on a school organization. Onorato (2013) found transformational leadership to be the most widely used style in his study of school principals. Hauserman and Stick (2013) found transformational leadership to have an effect on school communities from their studies findings. From the findings of this study, elements of communication, trust and respect, vision, change, and relationship building were discussed. The related literature reiterated the need for further emphasis to be placed on the intangible elements of leadership which are sometimes overlooked with the increased focus on student achievement and principals’ instructional leadership traits. The literature review discussed the effect of transformational leadership on organizations, including the educational field. Kouzes and Posner’s (2012) *Leadership Challenge* was used to explain their Five Pillars of Exemplary Leadership. Studies were included, in which the LPI survey was administered as an instrument

to guide findings on school leadership. The LPI has been used to measure the transformational leadership traits of different groups.

Chapter Summary

This chapter summarized the related literature used for the research study. Beginning with transformational leadership, the related literature highlights elements of the themes that emerged from the study's findings. These included intangible elements such as communication and trust, and the review of the literature highlights organizational and systems change and how that applies to change within an educational school setting. The second part of the review of the literature highlights transformational leadership with its intersection within the field of education, in particular educational leaders and principals. Finally, the literature review focused on Kouzes and Posner's *Leadership Challenge* and LPI (Kouzes & Posner, 2013), and Senge's (2006) organizational change was addressed. The next section discusses the methodology used to complete the research study.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Chapter Overview

The purpose of this mixed methods case study was to analyze the self-perceptions of principals' transformational leadership practices. This chapter describes the methods and procedures used to collect the data, the research design, the setting, participants, and sampling procedures, and the instrumentation used in the study. The study utilized a mixed methods case study approach that incorporated two surveys followed by individual interviews. The demographic and quantitative instrument surveys were sent to school principals of all grade level schools, both public and private, within the geographic locations of Westchester and Fairfield Counties. These geographic parameters and occupation of the participants bound the case study design. Data collected from the survey were used to analyze the transformational leadership of school principals through the Five Pillars of Exemplary Leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2013). Finally, the final survey question invited participants to volunteer to be involved with Phase 2 of the study.

Research Design

The research design for the study followed a mixed methods case study design based on Creswell and Plano Clark's (2011) work. Informed by Stake's (1995) instrumental case design, the researcher explored the leadership practices of principals by looking through the lens of a case study. Stake (1995) suggested that an instrumental case design is one where "the case serves to help us understand the phenomena or relationships within it..." (p. 77). For this case, the phenomenon under investigation was the transformational leadership perceptions of principal participants.

Creswell (2013) stated that case study design allows researchers to explore bounded phenomenon through multiple sources of information that are collected over a period of time. In this study, the data were collected in sequential order. By investigating current principals' self-perceptions, data were collected following Creswell's (2013) features of a case study design. Each form of data collection remained independent of one another while providing depth regarding the bound case. The case study design allowed the researcher to investigate the perceptions of principals' transformational leadership practices as the phenomenon of interest.

The parameters to identify participants for the case study, geographic location, and job title, served to guide the understanding of transformational leadership as the investigated phenomenon. A focus on this phenomenon bound the case to add understanding to the larger field of leadership research as the phenomenon of leadership was studied in depth (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995). This focus allowed for new insights regarding transformational leadership practices and beliefs and the opportunity to enhance what was already known about it (Merriam, 1998). This design was used to reveal different aspects of leadership that continued to highlight principals' leadership practices (Merriam, 1998). The focused lens of a case study on principal leadership practices guided later interpretations of the data regarding principal leadership practices.

The present study followed an instrumental case approach (Stake, 1995), with the case defined as the phenomenon of transformational leadership. This was an instrumental case design, as the case study was used to understand something else beyond the focus on school principal participants (Stake, 1995). The case of the phenomenon of transformational leadership was studied in-depth, and the instrumental design was used to understand a specific focus of the principal participants (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The case was bound by the sampling parameters of

the principal participants who had reached the equivalent job title of principal within the counties of Fairfield, Connecticut and Westchester, New York. The inclusion of the sampling boundaries helped to indicate the depth and breadth of the entire study (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

Setting, Participants, and Sampling Procedures

There were two phases of sampling in this research study. Figure 4 demonstrates the sampling process. The figure illustrates the surveys sent, surveys received, and interview participants.

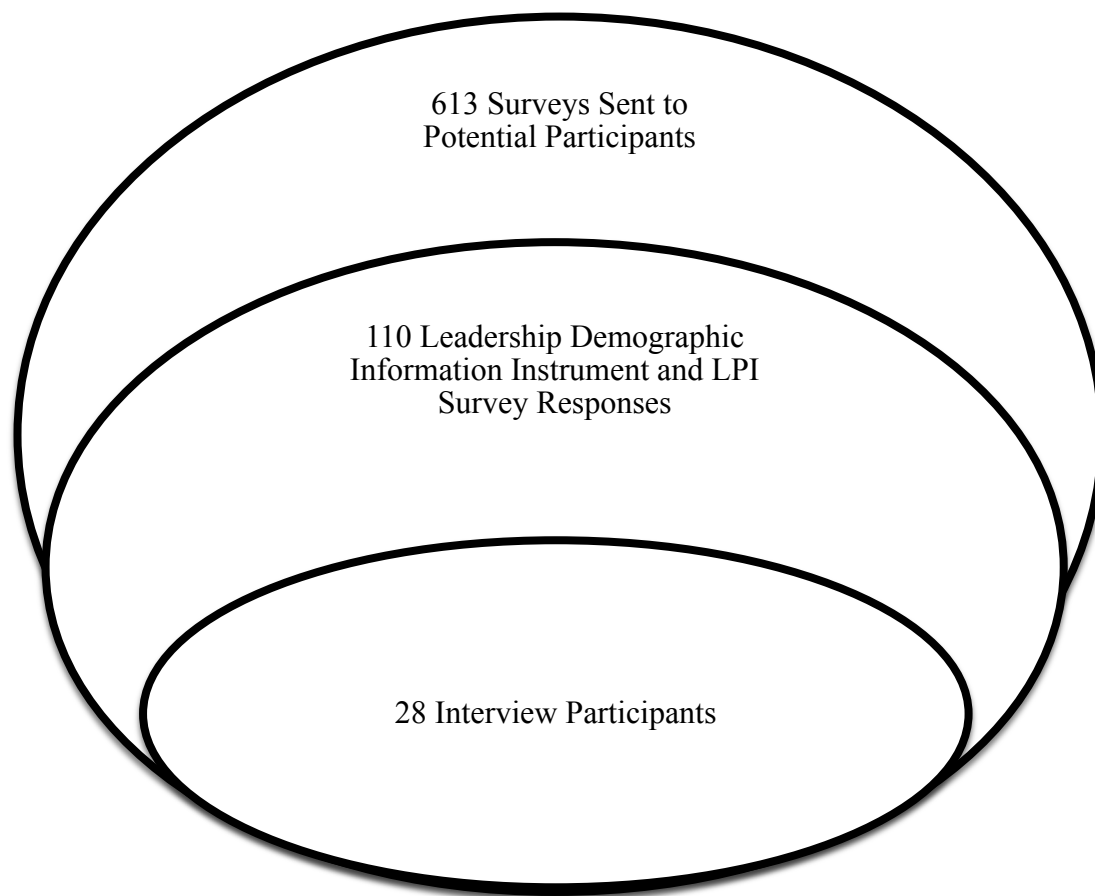


Figure 4. Description of sampling procedures.

The research involved a population of educational administrative leaders who have achieved the job title of building principal in a public school or division head or equivalent in a private school. The population was generated from the counties of Westchester, New York and

Fairfield, Connecticut. There were 43 school districts in Westchester County, New York totaling 257 public schools. There were 195 schools in Fairfield County, Connecticut. There were approximately 70 private or independent schools in Westchester County, New York and about 80 private/independent schools in Fairfield County, Connecticut.

Phase One. The principals and division heads of the 613 schools within Westchester and Fairfield Counties were invited to participate in the first phase of data collection, to complete the Leadership Demographic Information Instrument and LPI survey online. The potential participants fit the parameters of the bound case study, including job title (principal or division head equivalent), public or private school, and geographic location (Westchester and/or Fairfield counties). The National Center for Education Statistics resources from the 2013-2014 school year was used to inform the names of schools within the boundaries of the case study parameters. Potential participants were initially contacted through email via SurveyMonkey. The SurveyMonkey platform was used to create and distribute Phase 1 of the study to the potential participants.

Phase Two. Following Phase 1 data collection and analysis, a smaller sample—a subunit of analysis—was chosen to guide the second phase of the research study. A convenience sample fit the needs of the study and suited the overall purposes of the research study (Gall et al., 2003). In order to obtain an optimal sample size for the qualitative interview phase, participants were identified to participate based on their responses to the final survey question. The attrition of participants between Phase 1 and Phase 2 resulted in a convenience sample (Gall et al., 2003). Fifty-eight participants responded “Yes,” and 42 participants responded “No.” The researcher contacted each of the 58 participants to schedule Phase 2 of the study. Twenty-eight individual participants were interviewed for Phase 2 of the study, which met the expectation of the

minimum number of 20 originally proposed for the study, comprising the final participant group for Phase 2 sampling for the study. A total of 28 participants guided the investigation of the phenomena of transformational leadership. The participants in Phase 2 were a sub-unit of the case bound by the phenomenon of transformational leadership. The participants were chosen upon their individual responses to the final survey question, which asked, “Are you willing to participate in Phase 2 of this study (semi-structured interviews)?” The Phase 2 participants (28 total) were interviewed with a semi-structured protocol to answer Sub-Research Question #2 (Gall et al., 2003).

Instrumentation

The researcher used three data instruments to analyze principals’ leadership practices to investigate their transformational leadership. These were the Leadership Demographic Information Instrument, LPI, and Leadership Interview Protocol.

Leadership Demographic Information Instrument

The researcher-created Leadership Demographic Information Instrument was collected first, located on the second screen of the online link. Ten demographic questions supplemented the research’s findings and helped guide the comparisons made in the quantitative data analysis. The information was presented on one page, and the directions for use were stated before the survey appeared. Information was asked of participants to make comparisons between participants’ responses regarding their self-perceptions of leadership and their demographic profile information. An eleventh demographic question was asked at the end of the LPI survey that sought volunteers to participate in Phase 2 of the research study.

The Leadership Demographic Information Instrument was used to gather information on the backgrounds of each of the survey respondents. This information was used to compare and

contrast different demographic aspects of the respondents, such as years of experience, school level, and gender. The following are the 10 questions asked of each participant on the demographic data instrument. Each question has been labeled to indicate whether the participant response was solicited from a multiple-choice menu or from a fill in box (open typed in response).

1. Your age? (Multiple-choice)
2. Educational Job Title: (Fill-In)
3. How long have you worked in the education field? (Fill-In)
4. How long have you been a school administrator (total number of years)? (Fill-In)
5. Gender: (Fill-In)
6. Highest Degree Earned? (Multiple-choice)
7. Is your school? (Multiple-choice)
8. What is the school level in which you are a building leader? (Multiple-choice)
9. What is the approximate size of your school? (Multiple-choice)
10. What is the geographic location of your school? (Multiple-choice)

Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)

Upon completion of the demographic information, participants moved to the third page of the survey. There they received a prompt and directions “Please use the scale to respond to the following statement: How frequently do I engage in the behavior described?” Below the prompt, the numerical scale was listed indicating “1” corresponded with the response “almost never” while “10” corresponded with the response “almost always.” Underneath the directions and numerical scale, the questions of the LPI were listed, followed by a drop-down menu listing the numbers 1-10. Participants were asked to select the number that best answered the question

prompt above. At any time during the completion of the survey, participants were free to scroll back to the top of the page to read the prompt again and refresh their understanding of the numerical values. Below are sample questions from the survey corresponding to the pillar each is coded under (Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, Encourage the Heart). Listed next to each prompt below are the numeric numbers of where each question was found on the survey completed by the participants in the study.

1. Model the Way
 - a. (#1) I set a personal example of what I expect of others.
 - b. (#21) I build consensus around a common set of values for running our organization.
2. Inspire a Shared Vision
 - a. (#2) I talk about future trends that will influence how our work gets done.
 - b. (#12) I appeal to others to share an exciting dream of the future.
3. Challenge the Process
 - a. (#8) I challenge people to try out new and innovative ways to do their work.
 - b. (#13) I search outside the formal boundaries of my organization for innovative ways to improve what we do.
4. Enable Others to Act
 - a. (#4) I develop cooperative relationships among the people I work with.
 - b. (#19) I support the decisions that people make on their own.
5. Encourage the Heart
 - a. (#10) I make it a point to let people know about my confidence in their abilities.

- b. (#30) I give the members of the team lots of appreciation and support for their contributions.

The 31st question asked, “Are you willing to volunteer to participate in Phase 2 of this study (semi-structured interviews)?” The response format for the thirty-first question was multiple choice.

The LPI survey assessment has been deemed both a valid and reliable instrument. The reliability for the LPI (self) was analyzed through each of the Five Pillars of Exemplary Leadership according to Kouzes and Posner. The reliability coefficients for each subscale were “Model the Way” was .77, “Inspiring a Shared Vision” was .87, “Challenge the Process” was .80, “Enable Others to Act” was .75, and “Encourage the Heart” was .87. These numbers represent the survey’s internal reliability, and numbers above $> .60$ indicate consistency for designated items contained within the questions of the LPI (self) survey (2013). The LPI survey was applicable across many different professions and disciplines; however, test-retest reliability has been conducted within the field of education. Values range from 1 (low) to 10 (high).

The LPI has also been deemed a valid instrument, particularly regarding face-validity, in that the questions administered on the self-assessment are in-line with Kouzes and Posner’s Five Pillars of Exemplary Leadership. The LPI was also concurrently valid, as the elements of leadership that the instrument measures are often associated with specific aspects of leadership’s effect on organizational success (Leadership Practices Appendix, 2012). It was ranked in the top scores of similar leadership instruments in soundness and ease of use (Leadership Practices Appendix, 2012). The instrument has been correlated against other similar surveys that have further increased the confidence level that the LPI measures what it proposes to measure and met the parameters of construct validity (Leadership Practices Appendix, 2012).

Phase 2: Leadership Interview Instrument

The researcher created the “Transformational Leadership Interview Questions” prior to the first scheduled interview. Beginning with several icebreaker questions, the researcher wanted each participant to share his or her educational leadership journey to the role that he or she currently played today. Sample questions in this section included: “Tell me about your educational background” and “Please explain the path as to how you became the building leader of your school.” During some interviews, these questions were combined into one question. Two questions regarding transformational leadership were asked at the beginning of the interview. Those questions were “What is your definition of transformational leadership?” and “Do you consider yourself a transformational leader?” From there, the researcher quickly identified the central elements of exemplary leadership as guided by Kouzes and Posner’s five leadership pillars. In order to reach each pillar, the researcher ensured that at least one question from each pillar was asked of participants during every interview. Below are listed interview questions that were asked of participants and the leadership pillar each corresponded with.

1. Model the Way:
 - Kouzes and Posner believe that leaders must build credibility among their constituents. In what ways do you work to “do what you say you will do” within your building?
2. A Shared Vision:
 - How do you actively articulate your leadership vision to your faculty?
3. Challenge the Process:
 - How do you encourage and support your faculty to take risks and experiment?
4. Enable Others to Act:

- What avenues do you incorporate to develop cooperative relationships with your faculty and staff?

5. Encourage the Heart:

- What efforts have you made to praise your faculty for a ‘job well done’?

The researcher initially created a total of 34 questions to use during each interview.

Refer to the Appendix for all interview questions. As the interviews progressed, the researcher prepared for each by circling questions to target during the interviews in order to make sure each leadership pillar was addressed. As each of the 28 interviews progressed, the researcher began to combine several questions together in order to utilize the interview time. The researcher adapted the interview questions before each interview in order to ensure that the majority of the questions repeated throughout Phase 2.

Several concluding questions were asked of each participant in order to gain a different perspective on each participant’s philosophies on leadership and to see if any additional themes emerged or converged with the leadership pillar interview data. The concluding questions centered on transformational leadership in general. The researcher amended the concluding questions from the original interview questions document in order to gain a perspective of transformational leadership from all participants. The following are three examples of several concluding questions asked by the researcher at the conclusion of each interview.

Transformational Leadership Questions (concluding)

1. If I asked your faculty to generate three words, adjectives, or phrases to describe your leadership style, what three words or phrases would they come up with?
2. Are there any leadership traits that you are deficient in or actively working to improve on?

3. Are there any particular quotes or philosophies that continue to inspire you as a leader?

The information provided from the LPI self-survey was used to understand the phenomenon under investigation and provide specific results about the self-perceptions of the participant building leaders. The qualitative interview protocol was aimed at gathering further detailed information about each leader's perception of his or her own personal leadership traits. In-depth interviews developed the case by providing depth about each participant's unique experiences that go beyond one-word responses (Stake, 1995). These data were utilized to investigate the experiences of principals through the incorporation of their self-perceptions as leaders.

Data Collection Procedures

Phase One: Quantitative Data. Phase one data were collected online using the SurveyMonkey platform. The researcher reached out to 600 potential participants through to complete the Leadership Demographic Information Instrument and LPI survey. This phase of data collection spanned several weeks, and multiple reminder emails were sent through SurveyMonkey to elicit participants to participate. As responses came in, the researcher began to contact participants who identified "Yes" when asked to volunteer for Phase 2 of the research study.

Phase Two: Qualitative Data. Each interview participant was initially contacted via email and provided with a Doodle link. Once the participant arrived at the Doodle site, specific dates and times were listed spanning several weeks. As participants chose their interview date and time, the researcher reached out via email again to confirm the date and time, as well as ask for the participant to have the superintendent consent form completed prior to the onset of the

interview. The consent form was attached to confirmation email, and the participants had the option of providing a physical copy on the date of the interview or scanning and emailing the form back to the researcher prior to the interview date.

The researcher sent a reminder email on the day before the scheduled interview to remind participants of their upcoming appointment. As it was more convenient for participants to remain in their school buildings during the academic day, the researcher travelled to each participant's school in order to conduct the interview in the privacy of the principal participants' office. Upon arrival, each participant was asked to produce the signed superintendent consent form (if it had not been received prior to arrival). One participant asked to meet at a mutually agreed on location off the grounds of the school, and therefore did not obtain superintendent consent to participate in Phase 2 of the study. Participants who worked in a private school were asked to have their head of school, or another equivalent direct supervisor, sign off on the consent form. Additionally, verbal consent was gained from each participant in order for the researcher to record the interviews. Each interview lasted between 30 minutes and one hour. Table 1 highlights the data collection and timeline procedure used in the research study. Table 1 shows when each data collection occurred during Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the research study.

Table 1

Data Collection Calendar

Date	Activity
Phase 1	Distributed the Leadership Demographic
January/February 2017	Instrument and LPI Survey.
March 2017	Quantitative Data Analyzed.
Phase 2	Qualitative Interviews Scheduled and Conducted.
April/May 2017	Transcriptions Recorded.
Summer 2017	Qualitative Coding and Data Analysis
Fall 2017	Data Analysis and Final Coding.

Description of Case

The instrumental case study explored transformational leadership bound by the sampling parameters of the participants who had reached the equivalent job title of “principal” within the counties of Fairfield, Connecticut and Westchester, New York. The participants for Phase 1 of data collection included the 613 principals and division heads of schools within Westchester, New York and Fairfield, Connecticut counties. This phase included the LPI and demographic questionnaire. The participants for Phase 2 were generated from a sample of convenience from their response to the final demographic question that asked, “Are you willing to participate in Phase 2 of this study” (semi-structured interviews)? From this question, 41 participants responded “No” and 58 participants responded “Yes.” Twenty-eight followed through with all of the requirements of Phase 2 of the data collection. In the following section, information is shared about the 28 participants’ demographics and background. Table 2 further describes the cases by highlighting demographic elements for each qualitative interview participant.

Table 2

Case Profile Information

Name	Total Years in Education	Total Years as Administrator	School Level	Public or Private	Fairfield or Westchester County	Age
Adam	29	21	High	Public	Westchester	51-60
Anna	15	9	Middle	Private	Fairfield	51-60
Annie	28	15	Elementary	Public	Fairfield	51-60
Chris	27	5	Elementary	Private	Fairfield	51-60
Doug	18	9	Elementary	Public	Westchester	41-50
Emily	32	18	Middle	Private	Fairfield	51-60
Erik	22	3	Middle	Public	Fairfield	41-50
Gary	33	15	High	Private	Westchester	51-60
Henrik	25	18	High	Public	Fairfield	51-60
Jason	44	30	High	Public	Westchester	61-70
Jessica	25	16	High	Public	Westchester	41-50
Jody	30	28	Middle	Private	Fairfield	51-60
Kyle	2	2	High	Private	Fairfield	51-60
Lucas	22	15	High	Public	Westchester	41-50
Margaret	30	15	Elementary	Public	Westchester	51-60
Monica	33	25	High	Private	Westchester	51-60

(Continued)

Table 2

Case Profile Information

					Fairfield or	
	Total Years	Total Years as	School	Public or	Westchester	
Name	in Education	Administrator	Level	Private	County	Age
Nora	21	7	High	Private	Fairfield	41-50
Paul	21	17	High	Public	Westchester	41-50
Peggy	24	6	Elementary	Private	Fairfield	41-50
Phil	18	11	Middle	Private	Westchester	41-50
Rich	22	13	High	Public	Fairfield	41-50
Robert	39	16	High	Public	Westchester	61-70
Rosalie	11	4	High	Public	Fairfield	31-40
Rory	18	8	High	Public	Fairfield	31-40
Samantha	28	18	Elementary	Public	Westchester	41-50
Sarah	17	11	Elementary	Public	Fairfield	31-40
Timothy	17	10	High	Public	Fairfield	31-40
Vinny	19	7	High	Private	Westchester	41-50

Adam was a high school principal from a large suburban public school in Westchester County. He spent time working as an athletic director and assistant principal, which both gave him a sense of what the role of a principal might look like. Adam spoke about how knowing a school community and affecting it with a leader's vision takes time, and he has developed that

perspective in his school over the course of many years. He has been in the field of education for 29 years and worked as an administrator principal for 21.

Anna was a middle school principal from a large private suburban middle school in Fairfield County. Her focus has been on educating the whole child and has given her faculty ownership over new initiatives that she has worked to implement in her school. She has been in the field of education for 15 years and worked as an administrator for 9 years.

Annie was an elementary school principal from a large public urban school in Fairfield County. She has been in the field of education for 28 years and worked as an administrator for 15 years. She was ending her first year at her current school, and she came into the building knowing that she needed to watch, learn, and discuss as opposed to making knee-jerk reactions. Annie spent time talking and listening to her staff about where they had been and where they would like to go.

Chris was an elementary school principal from a small suburban private school in Fairfield County. He has felt refreshed with his role, and as though he is utilizing his degrees in a meaningful way in his time as principal. Chris spoke about transforming the math program in his building, and the steps he took to ensure that his faculty were on board during the process. He has been in the field of education for 27 years and has worked as an administrator for 5 years.

Doug was an elementary school principal from a large public suburban school in Westchester County. Coming to the field of education from a career change, he has kept what is best for students at the forefront of his mind in all aspects of school life. Doug provided examples of how he learned what was important to his faculty during his first few months in the building, which helped him develop cooperative relationships with his colleagues. He has been in the field of education for 18 years and worked as an administrator for 9 years.

Emily was a middle school principal from a private medium sized urban school in Fairfield County. Her career began in a large public middle school where she taught and served as an administrator for 30 years. Acknowledging the changes in the field of education, she changed jobs to a smaller, urban, private school where she has put her leadership skills to work in a more meaningful way. The changes Emily has made, both to the physical set up of the building and the cooperative relationships she has built, have worked to transform the school. She has been in the field of education 32 years and worked as an administrator for 18 years.

Erik was a middle school principal from a large public urban school in Fairfield County. His background was in science, and he has worked for several years at a newly opened middle school, which focuses on the development of science and math skills in students. Erik's work outside of his school has been published, and he spoke about his most recent writing that he hoped to have published soon. He has been in the field of education for 22 years and worked as an administrator for 3 years.

Gary was a participant who, at the time of the interview, was working as the Dean of Students. His principal was retiring at the end of the school year, and after completing the application and interview process, Gary was taking over the role of principal in the next few months. His principal sent the survey request to him, and he completed both phases of the research study. He has worked in the field of education for 33 years and been an administrator for 15 years. His school was a large suburban private high school located in Westchester County.

Henrik was a high school principal at a large suburban public school in Fairfield County. He has an interest in languages, and expressed an interest in pursuing another Master's degree in the field further down the line. Henrik mentioned that he has a focus on student learning, and

despite the other responsibilities of the job, he has remained focused on this element within his high school. He has been in the field of education for 25 years and worked as an administrator for 18 years.

Jason was a high school principal at a large suburban public school in Westchester County. He has been in the field of education for 44 years and worked as an administrator for 30 years.

Jessica was a high school principal at a medium sized suburban public school in Westchester County. She has been in the field of education for 25 years and worked as a school administrator for 16 years.

Jody was a middle school principal at a medium sized suburban private school in Fairfield County. She has been in the field of education for 30 years and worked as a school administrator for 28 years.

Kyle was a high school principal at a small urban private school in Fairfield County. He was completing his second year as principal along with his second year in the field of education. He came into the role after serving on the board of trustees. The school fell into hard times, and as the school searched for new leadership, they turned to Kyle because of his background with the Universal Peace Federation. He has also earned a Doctorate in Divinity.

Lucas was a high school principal at a large suburban public school in Westchester County. He spoke about eliminating midterms at his high school as an example of change that he worked through with both his faculty and the community. Lucas mentioned that as the principal, he was ultimately the one whose job was on the line and stated this fact to his staff in a meeting. He has been in the field of education for 22 years and worked as an administrator for 15 years.

Margaret was an elementary principal from a large suburban public school in Westchester County. She has worked at her current school for 26 years and was approached by her superintendent years ago asking if she was interested in administration. Margaret considered herself the school “historian,” and has used that as a catalyst for her role as principal. She has been in the field of education for 30 years and worked as an administrator for 15 years.

Monica was head of school at a large private suburban high school. She has been in the field of education for 33 years and worked as an administrator for 25 years. Monica responded to a request from the researcher’s employer asking for assistance from peer schools during data collection. Although she served as the head of school and not a division head, her insight into leadership added value to the qualitative data collection.

Nora was a high school principal at a large suburban private school in Fairfield County. She has worked to support her head of school’s vision but has also grown into her role by challenging the school, and her faculty, to try innovative educational approaches. Nora spoke about a time where she was challenged as a leader by a parent, and how that has guided her work as a division head ever since. She has been in the field of education for 21 years and worked as an administrator for 7 years.

Paul was a high school principal at a large suburban public school in Westchester County. He has been in the field of education for 21 years and worked in administration for 17 years.

Peggy was an elementary principal at a small suburban private school in Fairfield County. She has been in the field of education for 24 years and worked as an administrator for 6 years. Peggy spoke about the unique role she played in her school, where she has worked for several years in a division head role. She cited her experience as a classroom teacher as an

element that bought her credibility among her staff and allowed her to build trust among her colleagues. Peggy spoke about working as a collaborative team and how she always attempts to learn and stay current on the trends taking place in the field of education.

Phil was a middle school principal from a medium sized suburban private school in Westchester County. He has been in the field of education for 18 years and worked as an administrator for 11 years.

Rich was a high school principal at a large urban public school in Fairfield County. He has been in the field of education for 22 years and worked as an administrator for 11 years.

Robert was a high school principal at a large suburban public school in Westchester County. He has been in the field of education for 39 years and worked as an administrator for 16 years.

Rory was a high school principal at a large urban public school in Fairfield County. He has been in the field of education for 18 years and worked as an administrator for 8 years.

Rosalie was a high school principal at a large urban public school in Fairfield County. She has been in the field of education for 11 years and worked as an administrator for 4 years.

Samantha was an elementary principal at a large suburban public school in Westchester County. She has been in the field of education for 28 years and worked as an administrator for 15 years.

Sarah was an elementary principal from a large suburban public school in Fairfield County. She became a Phase 2 participant after her principal completed the survey and agreed to participate in Phase 2 of the study. She became sick and took a leave of absence, and Sarah stepped in as interim principal from her assistant principal role. She agreed to participate in the interview process and added insight regarding her experiences as interim principal for the past

several months. Sarah has been in the field of education for 17 years and worked as an administrator for 11 years.

Timothy was a high school principal at a large suburban public school in Fairfield County. He has been in the field of education for 17 years and worked as an administrator for 10 years.

Vinny was a high school principal at a private school in Westchester County. The researcher contacted him through the referral of a colleague, and he did not complete Phase 1 of the research study. His insight into leadership and the interview responses added valuable insight into his perception of transformational leadership.

Data Analyses

Quantitative Data

The quantitative data were analyzed through basic descriptive statistical measures using SPSS Version 22 (2013). The LPI results were compared with the Leadership Demographic Information Instrument to discover any connections between the collected information. The demographic information was compared with the LPI results to compare which of the five pillars of leadership were self-perceived as daily acts of principals in order to determine which pillars were most and least significant. The analysis included comparisons of central tendency and variability of the LPI's Five Pillars of Exemplary Leadership (Gall et al., 2003). The measure of central tendency placed a single numeric value on a larger set of scores (Gall et al., 2003). The numeric values included the mean and standard deviation. Variability was assessed in order to calculate the dispersion of scores (Gall et al., 2003). The researcher determined which participants were asked to take part in the qualitative data collection based on the participants' responses to the final survey question (Phase 2). A connected mixed methods data analysis

approach guided the interpretation of the survey results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Findings that emerged from the quantitative data determined how the Leadership Interview Instrument questions emerged or transformed from sub-research question #1 (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Qualitative Data

The data were analyzed through Creswell's (2013) approach for identifying themes that resulted as the data were coded and analyzed. This approach allowed individual beliefs to be bracketed throughout the study. Detailed in situ coding was used to describe the emerging themes from the participants' experiences (Creswell, 2013). The participants' own words were used during the coding process and themes emerged (Creswell, 2013), which were supported by participant utterances.

Several rounds of coding were incorporated to analyze the qualitative interview data. Each participant was assigned a pseudonym to protect the confidentiality of each participant. Setting and context, definition of the situation, perspectives held by subjects, subjects' ways of thinking about people and objects, process, activity, event, strategy, relationship and social structure, narrative, and methods codes were each used throughout the analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). This coding structure was used to analyze the qualitative interview responses from the 28 individual participants. These data further developed the complexity of the case by adding information about each participant's unique experiences that went beyond one-word responses (Stake, 1995). In addition, with Stake's (1995) conceptual structure, the issues that surfaced from the case helped to bring meaning towards principals' self-perceptions.

Data from the quantitative and qualitative data collection procedures were compared to enhance the interpretation of the results. Phase 1 data collection, basic demographic information

from the Leadership Demographic Information Instrument, were gathered to help evaluate the backgrounds of each of the survey respondents. This information was used to compare and contrast different aspects of the respondents, such as years of experience, school level, and gender. The information provided from the LPI (self) was used to help further explain the phenomena of transformational leadership and provide specific results about the self-perceptions of building leaders.

Coding

The researcher used open, axial codes to organize the qualitative data. Figure 5 demonstrates the first cycle of coding. The data were allowed to emerge instead of using planned categories. Initially, open coding in the margins of interview transcripts to initially code the participant words (Merriam, 2009) were developed as the researcher read through all 28 interviews using a pencil to underline words, phrases, and concepts.

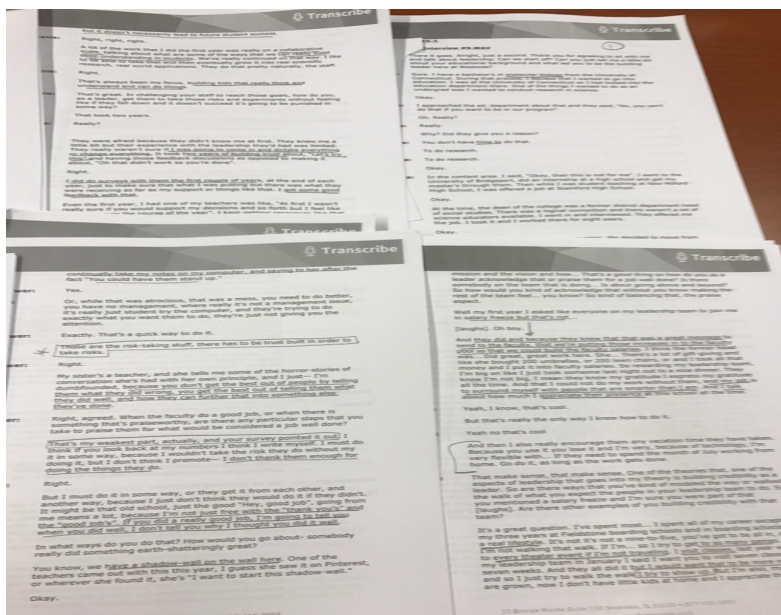


Figure 5. Initial coding cycle with pencil.

Once the process of open coding was completed with all 28 interviews, the researcher repeated the process. In the second cycle of coding, the researcher listened to each of the 28

interviews while scanning the written transcript. The second cycle of open coding allowed for axial analytical (Creswell, 2013) coding to develop. The researcher used highlighters to indicate categories with the second cycle of coding. Figure 6 illustrates the combination of the first and second coding cycles indicated by the use of pencil underlined, highlighted words, and open codes written in green pen in the margins.

Categories developed that crossed over between many interview participants transcripts, and recurring patterns and themes emerged from the interview data (Merriam, 2009). The categories were “abstractions derived from the data” (Merriam, 2009, p. 181). The researcher repeated the first cycle of coding twice, reading through all 28 transcripts with both the pencil and highlighter coding included. The coding was informed by the data, and the interview questions were guided by Kouzes and Posner’s (2012) leadership pillars. In vivo codes were used to analyze the qualitative data (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). In vivo coding included the use of “words or short phrases from the participant’s own language in the data record as codes” (Miles et al., 2014).

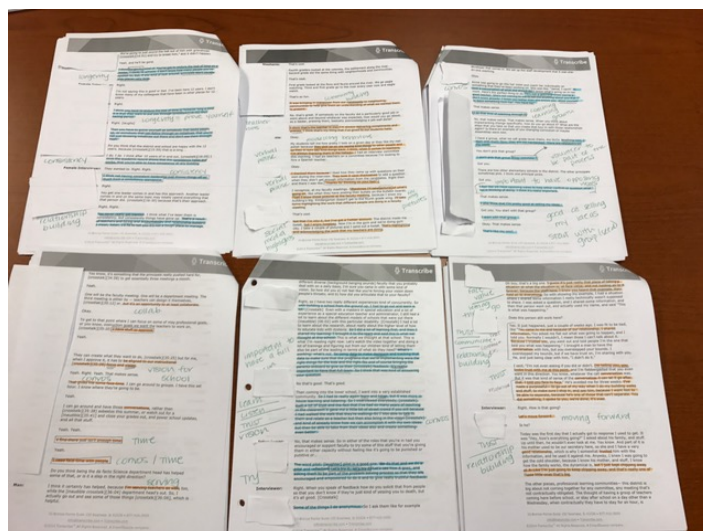


Figure 6. Second cycle of coding with highlighter and green pen written in the margins.

The code of “perspectives held by subjects” was used to “indicate orientations toward particular aspects of a setting” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The codes captured shared understandings and incorporated phrases of participants’ words in the coding analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Activity codes were used to group regularly occurring behaviors of participants, and the actions coded under were “relatively informal” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

Relationship and social structure codes were used to define regular patterns of behavior that were not easily defined within an organization (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The researcher identified this category of codes during the first cycles of initial coding in the participants words regarding their perceptions of transformational leadership. Next, the researcher created a visual representation beginning with each interview question. Each interview question was analyzed through physically cutting each response and taping to the wall. The researcher used adhesive notes to identify themes and codes that emerged from the responses. A whiteboard was used, and Expo markers were used to make connections between the interview responses. The researcher looked for meanings and connections between the coding cycles and attempted to link conceptual elements, or categories, together in different ways to create meaning (Merriam, 2009). Figures 7 and 8 below illustrate the interview questions cut up and taped to the wall along with the survey statistical information sorted by the Kouzes and Posner’s (2012) leadership pillars.

The data were organized and reduced throughout the three coding cycles. For the fourth and final round of coding, the researcher grouped the themes from the interview questions together and recorded them in a Microsoft word document. The document was organized by each interview question. Table 3 below illustrates an example of how the codes were developed

by the researcher, including the names of participants whose interview responses were coded in each theme and sub-theme. A sample of the coding process can be found in Appendix D.

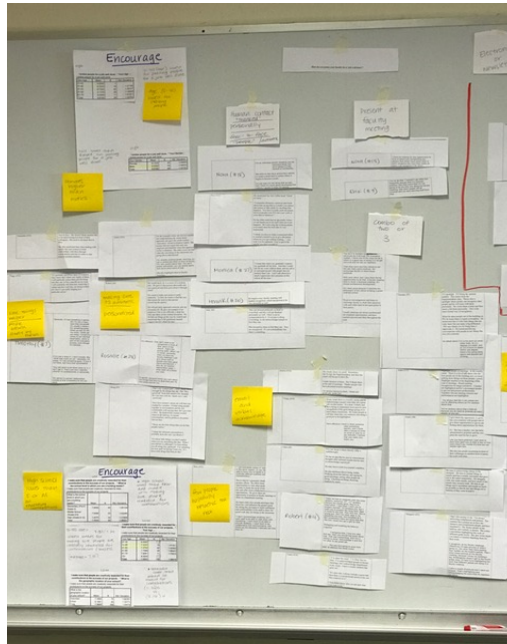


Figure 7. Third round of coding Part 1.

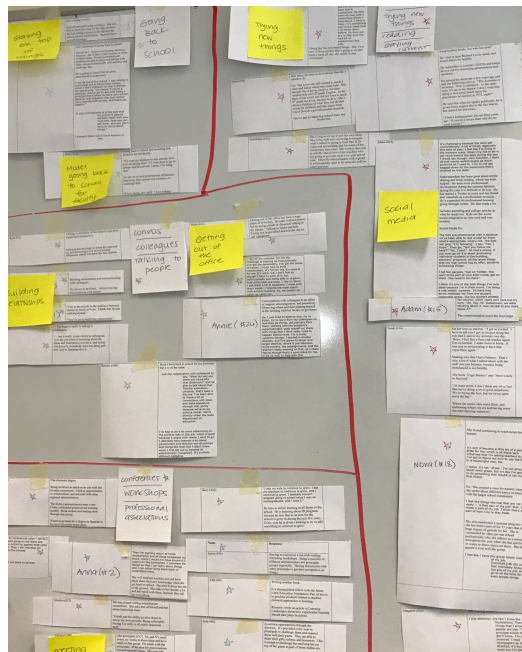


Figure 8. Third round of coding Part 2.

Table 3

Fourth Cycle Code Development

Coding Category	Participant
Willing to do the Job/Already done the Job Myself	<i>Jason, Annie, Henrik, Chris, Emily, Anna, Gary, Vinny, Sarah, Margaret, Timothy, Monica, Jessica, Jody, Paul</i>
Balance	<i>Phil, Henrik, Margaret, Monica</i>
Modeled Behaviors/ Interactions/Conversations	<i>Kyle, Samantha, Jason, Phil, Annie, Rich, Henrik, Chris, Emily, Lucas, Anna, Gary, Vinny, Sarah, Margaret, Timothy, Anna, Monica, Rosalie, Jessica, Peggy, Jody, Paul</i>
Accountability	<i>Kyle, Phil, Annie, Sarah, Rory</i>
Acknowledgement (good or bad)	<i>Kyle, Phil, Annie, Rich, Henrik, Emily, Anna, Sarah, Margaret, Timothy, Jessica, Peggy, Gary, Jody, Paul</i>
Build Relationships/Trust	<i>Samantha, Rich, Emily, Lucas, Anna, Vinny, Sarah, Margaret, Timothy, Rosalie, Jessica, Rory, Henrik, Peggy, Gary, Jody</i>
Immersed/Visible	<i>Chris, Anna, Vinny, Monica, Rosalie, Rory, Emily, Paul</i>
Delegate/Gain Different Perspectives	<i>Chris, Lucas, Jody</i>
Humility/Transparent/Listen and Learn/Mindful	<i>Sarah, Margaret, Anna, Monica, Rory, Henrik, Peggy, Annie, Jody, Paul</i>

The researcher developed the interview findings through the lens of each interview question. This allowed the researcher to initially allow participant words to be seen through the lens of the interview question response. Once the interview coding was completed, the researcher began to move pieces from each question within the appropriate theme for each finding statement. The researcher used a print out of the interview responses and a pen to complete the final round of coding. This allowed for the participant words to fall within each theme. Finding statements emerged through the compilation of participant interview responses.

Finding Statement 1 was the following: Participant principals believe themselves to be, or were, transformational leaders. Theme 1 was “Yes” for the 13 participants to identify as transformational leaders in the interview response. Theme 2 was “At Times or I try” for the 12 participants who identified with the response during the interview question. Theme 3 was “No” in reference to the two participants who did not identify themselves as being transformational leaders.

Finding Statement 2 was the following: Change was a central tenet to the participant principals’ interpretations of transformational leadership. The following themes emerged from the data analysis: the definitions of transformational leadership, communication, collaboration, vision and big picture, transforming people, and self-perceptions.

Finding Statement 3 was the following: The intangible human elements of leadership were a central tenet to the participant principals' perceptions of transformational leadership. The first theme to emerge was communication, with sub-themes of acknowledgment, building relationships, listening, and the value placed on communication. The second theme was model the behavior, with the sub-themes of praise, visible/open, leading people, self-perceptions, and vision. The third theme was relationship building, with the sub-themes of acknowledgment, trust and respect, vision for the school and themselves, and self-perceptions.

Once the responses were generated from each question, the researcher organized the interview questions through the study's overall research questions. Themes found in the interview responses were incorporated as themes within each finding statement. The themes emerged from the participant words that were coded similarly throughout each interview question. The researcher read each theme and participant examples thoroughly to determine the participants words were moved into the correct sub-theme.

Participant quotes or words were not altered and are provided as quoted in Chapter Four. In the following section, the process of trustworthiness was addressed throughout the study. Triangulation of data sources, reflexive journaling, member checking, bracketing, and a thick description were used to address issues of trustworthiness. The following section involves a discussion of the trustworthiness, threats, and limitations of the study.

Trustworthiness

Gall et al. (2003) defined the reliability of a case study as the "extent to which other researchers would arrive at similar results if they studied the same case using exactly the same procedures as the first researcher" (p. 460). The four elements of trustworthiness addressed any aspects of this concept within the study (Krefting, 1991). The use of a reflexive journal allowed

the researcher to bracket out any biases or emotions during data collection, and the entries were composed within 2 to 3 days after the completion of each interview. This allowed the participant's words and experiences to guide the data analysis and findings of the study.

Credibility

Krefting (1991) stated that the case is credible when “what the researcher presents describes the reality of the participants who informed the research in ways that resonate with them” (p. 413). The researcher bound the case and explained the findings and results as clearly and richly as possible (Krefting, 1991). The researcher repeated a set of questions to each interview participant that mirrored the wording used for each pillar of the LPI survey. The repetition of interview questions and wording throughout the qualitative interviews helped to ensure credibility among the study's participants.

Transferability

Transferability in the following case study was used in that the lessons and recommendations of the case can potentially apply to others (Krefting, 1991). Thick description of the interview responses and data coding and analysis were used to add transferability to the study, and this included a thorough description of the 28 interview participants and the setting of the study.

Dependability and Confirmability

Dependability was met through the triangulation and use of a demographic survey, the LPI, and 28 one-on-one interviews of principals bound by the case study. Merriam (2009) stated that triangulation was employed by using three sources of data collection. The researcher accomplished triangulation through the inclusion of a demographic survey, LPI survey, and individual interviews. The triangulation of two different sources and methods of data collection

helped to provide “a number of different slices of data (also) minimizes distortion from a single data source or from a biased researcher” (Krefting, 1991). Using a reflexive journal, the researcher maintained bracketed thoughts in order to address the confirmability of the study. The utilization of the reflexive journal helped to ensure the trustworthiness of the data analysis by providing a method for the researcher to bracket her personal feelings without jeopardizing the interpretation of the data (Krefting, 1991). From the combination of quantitative and qualitative data analyzed, petite, grand, or counter generalizations about the data emerged regarding the particular case under investigation (Stake, 1995).

Threats

Population Validity

There were threats to the external validity of the study. First, there were threats to the population validity, in that the results cannot be generalized to a larger population of participants (Gall et al., 2003). The self-perception results found of principals included in the case study were specifically bound to this case and cannot be generalized to a different geographic region or level of school administrative leadership. Additionally, participants’ personological variations (Gall et al., 2003) were a threat. As Gall et al. (2003) suggested, population validity can also limit the ability of the researcher to generalize the study’s findings. The principals’ introverted or extroverted personality dispositions contributed to varied responses of the participants and threatened the generalizations. Generalizations beyond the bound case study were not made when analyzing the study’s findings.

Experimenter Bias

Experimenter bias refers to any expectations or outcomes that the researcher anticipates prior to the conclusion of the study that might affect participants’ behavior and therefore the

overall outcomes (Gall et al., 2003). This threat may have affected the study during the interview data collection phase. The researcher remained aware of her perceptions while gathering the detailed self-perceptions of school principals by using bracketing through a reflexive journal that addressed personal, methodological, and theoretical issues, which enhanced the credibility of the research (Krefting, 1991).

Limitations

Limitations to the online surveys distributed in Phase 1 were minimal. The researcher used the site “SurveyMonkey” to distribute both surveys and this protected the distribution of personal information. Specific limitations were placed on the survey during the creation, including the number of responses submitted and the format for responses. During the interview process, it was possible that the emotions and biases of the researcher influenced the outcomes and analysis of the participant words during the study.

Summary

The previous chapter identified the methodology used in the study. The mixed methods case study incorporated a researcher created demographic instrument, the LPI survey, and a qualitative interview as sources of data collection. The phenomenon of transformational leadership defined the case, and two groups of participants were sampled across two phases of data collection to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The mixed methods design utilized a researcher created demographic instrument followed by the LPI survey during Phase 1 data collection. The second phase of participant sampling occurred during Phase 2 data collection. Participants volunteered to be contacted by the researcher to participate in the qualitative phase of data collection. Upon collection of qualitative data in Phase 2, the

data analysis and coding process began which led to three finding statements. In the following chapter, the results of the study will be discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF DATA AND EXPLANATION OF THE FINDINGS

The purpose of the study was to explore the self-perceptions of principals' transformational leadership practices. The researcher used a survey and individual interviews to inform the following research questions:

Research Question: How do building level leader participants understand their perceptions of transformational leadership?

Sub-Research Question #1: What were building level leader participants' perceptions of their leadership practices based on their LPI survey responses?

Sub-Research Question #2: How were Kouzes and Posner's Five Pillars of Exemplary Leadership part of those perceptions?

Chapter Four presents the analysis of the data in response to each of the research questions. The findings of the study demonstrated that participants who identify as principals perceived themselves to be transformational leaders.

Case

The study was conducted as a mixed methods case study to explore the phenomenon of transformational leadership with participants bound by the parameters of school officials from Westchester County, New York and Fairfield County, Connecticut who self-identified as school principals. The researcher sent the initial survey request to 613 potential participants. The 28 participants who were each interviewed to inform the qualitative findings are featured in Table 2. Following initial data collection and analysis of the LPI surveys, 28 individual interviews were conducted to further investigate participants' self-perceptions of their transformational leadership practices. Table 5 highlights the interview participant cases who were originally sampled by their job position as principals within the geographic boundaries of Fairfield County,

Connecticut and Westchester County, New York. Sixteen participants worked in a high school, five worked in a middle school, and seven worked in an elementary school. Twelve participants worked in private schools, and 16 participants worked in public schools. Of the 28 total participants, 15 worked in Fairfield County, Connecticut, while 13 worked in Westchester County, New York. Each participant was initially asked at the onset of the interview to speak about his or her educational background in order to provide deeper context to their responses. The responses indicated that several participants arrived to their role from alternative backgrounds outside the field of education. Participants' years of experience varied, as well as their age ranges.

There is a discussion in the following section on the demographic information reported from the researcher created survey.

Demographic Information

Each participant responded to 10 demographic questions before taking the LPI survey. The questions were researcher created and were administered prior to the LPI survey. Demographic information was collected in order to further enhance the case study. The information was compared to the LPI results to further analyze the data. Each demographic question was reported and compared to the results of the LPI survey mean pillars. The researcher was able to further analyze the case study. The results of the demographic survey can be found in the sections that follow.

Age

Participants were asked to respond to the question of their age on a scale format. The ages were chronological by year and were bracketed into nine-year age ranges. One participant identified as being 70 years of age or older, and one participant identified as being between the

age range 21 and 30. Twenty participants identified as being between the ages of 31 and 40.

Forty-five participants identified as being between the age range of 41-50. Eleven participants identified as being between the age range of 51 and 60.

Educational Job Title

Participants responded to the question of “What is your educational job title?” in an open response box. There were no guidelines or parameters placed to guide participants on their responses. Table 4 demonstrates the educational job title responses participants filled in with the numerical total listed adjacent to it. These were bracketed into 15 different categories to represent accurately the titles participants identified as their most current position title. The following table illustrates the job titles participants entered into the demographic survey.

Table 2

Educational Job Title of Participants with Numerical Total

Educational Job Title	Total Number of Participants
Head of Upper School/Upper Campus	6
Principal	71
Head of Lower School	5
Head of Middle School/Middle School Principal	5
Head of Lower School/Principal of the Lower School	1
Supervisor of Special Education	1
Elementary Principal	4
Director of Education	1
Coordinator of Preschool	1
Director	2
Head of School/Headmaster	4
Assistant Principal	1
High School Principal	7
Director of Student Programs	1
Dean of Students	1

Number of Years in Education

Each participant responded to the question “How many years have you been in the field of education?” Participants filled in the number of years, and the researcher bracketed the responses into five-year spans. Table 5 illustrates the number of participants who identified as

having the following number of total years in the field of education. The following table illustrates the total number of years participants identified as the total number of years they have worked in the field of education.

Table 3

Total Number of Years in Education with Numerical Total

Total Number of Years in Education	Number of Participant Responses
1 year to 5 years	1
5 years to 10 years	2
11 years to 15 years	15
16 years to 20 years	14
21 years to 25 years	35
26 years to 30 years	9
30+ years	24

Total Number of Years as a School Administrator

Participants were asked to respond to the question “How many years have you worked as a school administrator?” The response was open ended and there were no parameters or guidelines placed for participant responses. The results of the open-ended question are listed in Table 6. The numbers of years as a school administrator were bracketed into groups of 5 years with the total number of participant responses who answered within each range listed in the column on the right. The following table illustrates the total number of years participants identified as serving as a school administrator.

Table 4

Total Number of Years as a School Administrator with Numerical Total

Total Number of Years as a School Administrator	Number of Participant Responses
1 year to 5 years	24
6 years to 10 years	28
11 years to 15 years	30
16 years to 20 years	13
21 years to 25 years	6
26 years to 30 years	4
30+ years	5

Gender

Participants replied about their gender and were given a fill in menu box to type in their free response. All participants identified as either male or female. Fifty-eight participants identified as male. Fifty-two participants identified as female.

Highest Degree Earned

Participants identified the highest degree that they earned from the five options listed in the survey question. The options were a question that they earned from a menu box to type in their free response. The researcher did not place definitions or parameters next to the name of each degree. From the results of the demographic question, 62 participants identified as earning a Master's+ degree, 25 participants identified as earning a Doctorate degree, and 15 participants identified as earning a Master's degree, next to the name of each degree.

Public or Private

Participants were asked to respond as to whether their school was a private or public school. Participants designated their response from the two options listed. Private schools were not categorized by religious or any other affiliation. Private schools were grouped together as a general distinction from publicly funded institutions. No other designation was made regarding private schools. From the responses to this demographic question, 75 participants identified as working at a public school and 34 participants identified as working at a private school.

School Level

Participants identified the school level of the building they worked in from the three choices listed. Elementary level was designated as kindergarten to fifth grade. Middle school was designated as sixth through eighth grade, and high school was designated as ninth through 12th grade. Fifty participants identified their school level as elementary level. Twenty-five participants identified their school level as middle school level. Thirty-four participants identified their school level as high school level.

Size of the School

Participants responded regarding the size of their school. A small school was designated as having 100 or fewer students, medium size with students between 100 and 300, and large size as 300 students or over. Participants used the drop down menu to identify the level of their school. Four participants identified their school as small. Nineteen participants identified their school as medium size. Eighty-seven participants identified their school as large in size.

Geographic Location

Participants answered the drop down question to identify the area of location for their school. There were no parameters for participants to use when defining their response. The

three options were listed and participants identified which geographic setting most accurately represented their current school. Eighty-six participants identified their school as located in a suburban setting. Twenty -four participants identified their school as located in an urban location. No participants identified their school as located in a rural setting.

Number of Years as an Administrator

Participants responded to how many years they have worked as an administrator, although not necessarily as a building principal or in their current school. The years were bracketed into 9-year timeframes, with participants who identified as serving over 21 years as an administrator bracketed into the same group. Table 7 illustrates the number of years each participant identified as serving as an administrator for.

Coding and Cleaning of the Quantitative Data

Coding of Data

The researcher used a codebook to code the data used for the quantitative data analysis. The researcher used a codebook to place numeric values within SPSS to generate quantitative data findings. Each demographic question was coded to generate findings through SPSS Version 22 (2013).

Missing Value Data

To ensure consistency and accuracy of the data, the researcher cleaned the data prior to analyses. Several participants missed completing leadership survey questions, and there were four in the survey results overall. To address this issue, a Missing Value Analysis (MVA) procedure was used to improve the quality of the data in SPSS. The question mean values were substituted for the missing values in the data set. The missing value mean substitution for each survey question was calculated and inputted into the missing values for the data set.

Quantitative Findings

The survey results highlighted questions, and areas, in which respondents' mean scores were the highest and lowest. Descriptive statistics were run through SPSS to identify the pillar survey data. The high mean questions reflected the human element of leadership, which participants believe they are actively incorporating. The high mean questions were used to generate qualitative interview questions to complete Phase 2 of the research study.

LPI Survey Results

The LPI survey was administered to all participants bound by the parameters of the case study research. This included participants who identified as building principals within the counties of Westchester, New York and Fairfield, Connecticut. The LPI survey measured the leadership traits of participants who identified as working as principals in an educational setting.

Prior to completing the survey, participants were asked 10 demographic identifying questions. The questions were researcher created and the means of each of the Leadership pillars were used as a part of the descriptive analysis. Each demographic question is explained and highlighted below. Participants then completed the 30 questions of the LPI. There were six statements asked per leadership pillar. The questions were mixed together so that participants were not responding to one pillar at a time. Participants responded to the questions on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest). Participants responded to each statement based on their self-perceptions of their own leadership practices.

The researcher performed descriptive statistics on the LPI survey statistical numbers. The survey questions were renamed because they were too long to work with the SPSS program. The numerical demographic information was coded in Excel and converted into SPSS for further analysis. The fill-in demographic questions asking "What is your current job title?" and "Will

you volunteer to participate in Phase 2 of the study?” were not analyzed in the descriptive quantitative statistical analysis. One hundred and thirteen participants completed the LPI. The missing value section indicates missing data from the survey. An average for each of the Five Pillars of Exemplary Leadership was analyzed through SPSS.

In the *Model the Way* pillar, the lowest average was found for question number 16 at 7.55 and the highest average was found for question number 1 at 9.35. In the *Inspire* Pillar, the lowest average was for question number 17 at 7.41 and the highest average was for question number 27 at 9.11. The *Challenge* Pillar’s highest average was 8.51 for question number 18 and the lowest average was for question number 13 at 7.71. The *Enable* Pillar had a high average for question number 14 at 9.74 and a low average for question number 24 at 8.30. Finally, the *Encourage* Pillar had a low average for question number 15 at 7.55 and a high average for question number 5 at 8.80. The calculations provided were made from the data using the initial Excel spreadsheet file and through the SPSS statistical software program. Tables 7 to 9 indicate the descriptive statistics for each survey Pillar.

Table 5

Descriptive Mean Statistics for LPI Survey by Pillar

Model	Mean	8.570
	Std. Deviation	.784
	Minimum	6.330
	Maximum	10.000
	Skewness	-.748
	Kurtosis	.537
Inspire	Mean	8.100
	Std. Deviation	.9382
	Minimum	3.830
	Maximum	9.830
	Skewness	-1.292
	Kurtosis	4.006

(Continued)

Table 7 (continued)

Descriptive Mean Statistics for LPI Survey by Pillar

Challenge	Mean	8.229
	Std. Deviation	.9106
	Minimum	4.330
	Maximum	10.000
	Skewness	-.801
	Kurtosis	2.056
Enable	Mean	8.843
	Std. Deviation	.653
	Minimum	6.670
	Maximum	10.000
	Skewness	-.560
	Kurtosis	.706
Encourage	Mean	8.263
	Std. Deviation	1.062
	Minimum	4.800
	Maximum	10.000
	Skewness	-.735
	Kurtosis	.876

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for LPI by High Mean Pillar Question

Pillar	Mean	Standard		
		Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Model	9.35	.741	7	10
Inspire	9.11	.858	7	10
Challenge	8.51	1.33	4	10
Enable	9.74	.513	7	10
Encourage	8.80	1.26	5	10

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for LPI for Low Mean Pillar Question

Pillar	Mean	Standard		
		Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Mode	7.55	1.72	1	10
Inspire	7.41	1.58	1	10
Challenge	7.71	1.65	1	10
Enable	8.30	1.29	4	10
Encourage	7.55	1.49	1	10

In response to Research Question two, the LPI survey results highlighted different elements regarding principals' self-perceptions of exemplary leadership. For each of the five pillars, the high and low mean score were analyzed and compared to understand principals' self-perceptions. By focusing on the high and low mean questions, the researcher specific questions within each leadership pillar in comparison with the interview responses.

The high mean question in the Model the Way pillar was "I set a personal example of what I expect of others." The lowest mean survey question in the Model the Way pillar was "I ask for feedback on how my actions affect other people's performance." The low mean question that corresponded with the pillar of Challenge the Process was "I search outside the formal boundaries of my organization for innovative ways to improve what we do." In the same pillar, the high mean score question was "I ask, 'What can we learn?' when things don't go as expected." The question that earned the highest mean under the pillar Inspire a Shared Vision was "I speak with genuine conviction about the higher meaning and purpose of our work." The question that resulted in the lowest mean score was "I show others how their long-term interests can be realized by enlisting in a common vision."

The Challenge the Process pillar question that earned the highest mean score was "I ask 'What can we learn?' when things don't go as expected." The question that earned the lowest mean score in the Challenge the Process pillar was "I search outside of the formal boundaries of my organization for innovative ways to improve what we do." The fourth pillar of exemplary leadership, Enable Others to Act demonstrated a high mean question "I treat others with dignity and respect." The question that earned the lowest mean in the pillar was "I give people a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work." The final pillar of exemplary leadership, Encourage the Heart evidenced a high mean question as "I praise people for a job

well done.” The question that earned the lowest mean score was “I make sure that people are creatively rewarded for their contributions to the success of our projects.”

During Phase 2 of the research study (qualitative interviews), the researcher-formulated questions from each of the Five Pillars of Exemplary Leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). This process ensured that each participant was asked questions regarding each pillar to gather a representative proportion of data during the interviews.

Qualitative Analysis and Findings

From the interviews, findings emerged highlighting participants’ perspectives in relation to the study’s second research question. The human aspects of leadership were elements to which participants returned when responding to the interview questions. Components of this theme included communication, visibility, modeling the behavior, and developing relationships with faculty. There was the perception that transformational leadership combines the change process with these human aspects to help the school achieve its goals.

From the data analysis, three finding statements emerged. First, participant principals believed themselves to be, or are transformational leaders. Second, participant principal’s self-perceptions of transformational leadership combined the change process with leading people. Finally, participant principals placed emphasis on the human aspects of their jobs in relation to their self-perceptions of transformational leadership. Figure 9 illustrates the three finding statements.

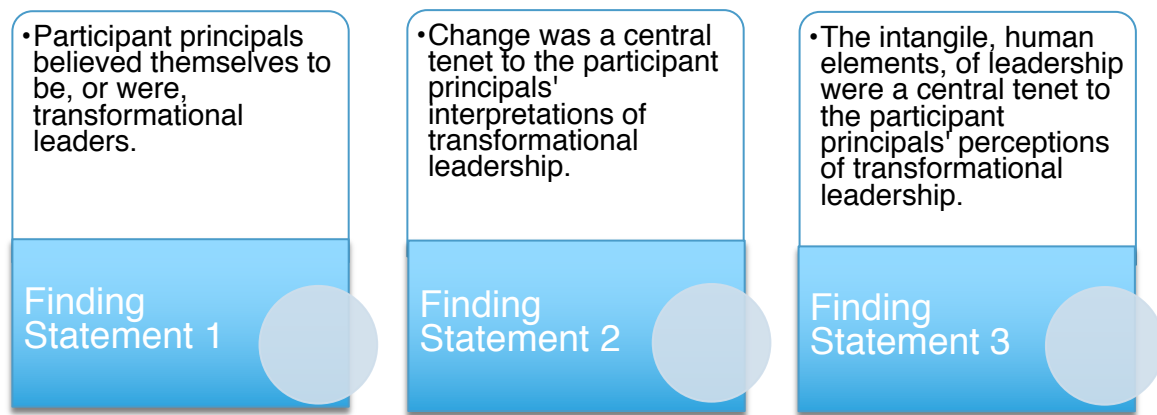


Figure 9. Three finding statements.

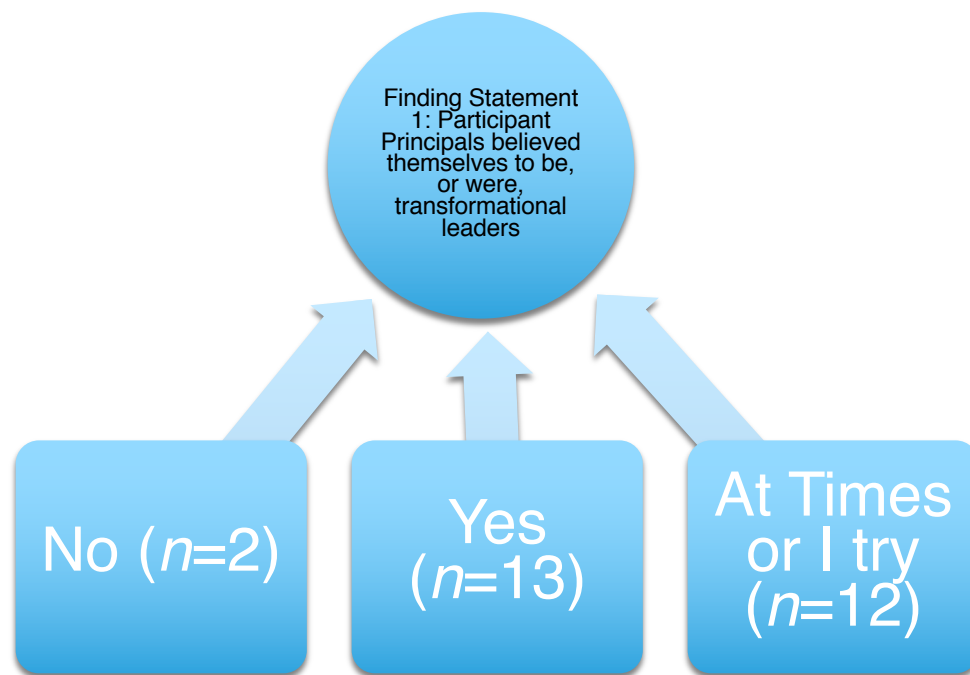


Figure 10. Finding Statement 1.

The first finding statement resulted from the participant responses to the second interview question in combination with the analysis of the subsequent interview questions. Figure 10 highlights the first finding statement and three categories. When asked the question “Would you consider yourself a transformational leader,” 13 participants immediately responded with a

“Yes” answer to the question, while two immediately responded with a “No” answer. Twelve participant responses began in the middle, with responses initiated with an “I try,” “I hope,” or “At times.” Two participants responded to the question with a “No” response. The statement emerged from the data collected on whether participants considered themselves to be transformational leaders through the qualitative interview question. The statement emerged from the data about their roles as transformational leaders in their schools, particularly the human elements that are part of their roles.

Finding Statement 1: Category 1: Response of No

Two participants did not identify themselves as transformational leaders. Henrik and Doug each responded by stating “No.” Henrik stated,

I wouldn’t say I’m transformational. I think that I certainly get things done. I think I’m aware of where we are right now. I have a vision for where we need to go. I know of other leaders who I would describe [me] as more [of a] change agent than I am.

Doug also responded with a “No” answer and followed up by stating,

When you think about it in that way, it doesn’t matter whether I think I’m transformational or not. Really in the end, my role is to create a better environment for students. However, I have to do that to make that happen is where I’ve been.

Henrik compared himself with other similar principals as being more of a change agent than he considers himself to be. Doug’s response reflected his mentality of doing what is best for students, but acknowledging that he has to do whatever it takes to make that happen. Both participants did not feel they were able to classify themselves as transformational leaders.

Finding Statement 1; Category 2: At Times or I Try

Participants' initial responses to the interview question were coded under the theme "At Times" and "I try" to distinguish a category that fell in-between definitive "Yes" and "No" responses. Rich, Vinny, and Annie were classified under "I try" as it was an initial response to the question. Annie followed up by stating that she perceives herself as not having a "knee jerk" reaction and is responsive to people's needs. Vinny stated, "I would say I'm definitely conscious of trying to make a real effect, and I try to build a team here that does that as well." Rich responded by saying that he tries to be, but commented that, "Am I fully vetted as a transformational leader? No. It's always a work in progress..." Annie, Rich, and Vinny responded to the question immediately with a response that did not classify as a definitive "Yes" or "No" response.

Nora and Samantha responded with the phrase "I hope." Nora immediately commented with the question "Can I say I hope I am?" Samantha responded by saying, "I hope so" and followed her comment by mentioning the collaboration that occurs by stating, "While the leader has a big part in it, everybody plays a role in that process to keep each other going and inspire one another so that the transformations happen." Nora and Samantha were categorized separately because their responses indicated elements of improvement and falling in-between an attempt (I try) and sometimes (at times.) Because their first response was not "Yes," they were not categorized into the "Yes" code group. The final category under the code "At Times" was labeled "At Times/Maybe." Several participants responded with the thought that at times they would consider themselves to be transformational leaders. Jason said that at times he considers himself a transformational leader, but part of that is learning from experience regarding which battles to fight. Margaret's initial response was "I don't really know what that necessarily means

to say that,” followed by her comments regarding always trying to get better. Robert replied, “Maybe, not a great one,” while Erik said, “At times, I’m sure.” Paul’s first comment was “I guess at times I could be,” while Gary said, “I think that I have some of those qualities.”

Thirteen participants believed that they are trying, or hope to be, transformational leaders but were more hesitant to identify themselves as such. Lucas responded, “transformational leadership is something we aspire to and it’s really left for other people to judge whether or not you do it.” Rich hesitated to define himself as a transformational leader. His response demonstrated this hesitation. “I try to be. I don’t know if I can qualify myself as that. I try to be. I don’t know if I’ve reached that. I don’t think you ever can.” As principals began by defining transformational leadership, it was clear that in order to enact change it was impossible to ignore the human constituents as an integral part of the process.

Finding Statement 1: Category 3: Response of Yes

Participants who responded with a “Yes” response were coded into two groups: “Yes” and “I hope to be.” Participants who responded with a “Yes” were coded into the group “Yes” as a result of participants initially responding by using the word “Yes.” Phil and Adam each initially responded with the statement “I hope to be” when the interview question was asked. Phil stated,

I’m trying to work on to be that kind of inspirational figure to get people to want to make the changes, to not be satisfied with the way things are, to think about the way things could be and then to chase after what those things are.

Adam said, “I think you have to. I think you don’t exist. I don’t think you exist and would stand the test of time. I think you have to be.”

Anna, Rosalie, Sarah, Jody, Chris, Jessica, Kyle, Monica, Rory, Peggy, and Emily each responded with the word “Yes” when asked if they considered themselves transformational leaders. Each participant who responded with a “Yes” answer was then asked to explain why he or she believed that. Anna commented,

I give [teachers] ownership. That’s not going to happen from me. It’s not top-down. It’s a bottom-up. They’re going to be the ones to create that. That’s not going to be me. I give them a lot of leeway to be able to create things.

Rory used the analogy of change as a metamorphosis when defining transformational leadership and continued with that theme in his “Yes” response by stating that, “I’d like to think that I’ve got the capacity to allow for that metamorphosis to occur.” Rosalie’s response was simply, “Modestly, yes, I suppose so.”

Sarah served as interim principal during the time of the interview and responded with a “Yes” when asked if she considered herself a transformational leader and compared it to her role as an assistant principal. She stated, “You realize you are directly responsible to the parents more so than in the AP chair and then to the assistant superintendent and superintendent and board of education in a way that you’re not as an assistant principal.” Jody’s career focused on leading several turnaround schools, and she stated,

I’ve only gone into dire situations that needed change. So that’s always been the running joke. I’ve never been in a school that’s had money to do with whatever it needs to do. I don’t know what it would be like to do that.

Her response reflected her prior experience working in different school settings where resources were limited, and how at this point in her career, she has chosen jobs that allow her the opportunity to implement change in her role as principal.

Jessica also responded “Yes” when asked if she considered herself a transformational leader and stated that, “Yes, based on the fact that I consult with my staff. I think about what’s in the best interest of them.” Chris also responded, “Yes” to the question and stated that, “Why should education be any different than medicine in some cases? We should do the same thing when it comes to our faculty and their needs and their development.” His comparison to the medical field provided a further lens to analyze participants’ self-perceptions.

Monica also perceived herself as a transformational leader and explained it with the following statement, “There’s a big difference between presiding and leading. Presiding is pretty easy. Leading is very ... is more action with leading. If you’re presiding then this is not your school.” Peggy responded by saying that, “I think there are times when you have to be transactional in this job, but then there’s a lot of opportunity to also be a visionary and be transformational. So it’s really changing the culture of thinking about education.” Her response was similar to Emily’s comments when she said, “Up until this year, she would have said no. This year she feels like a transformational leader.” Emily recognized that her role this year has been more of a transformational role than in prior years.

Elaborating on their perception of transformational leadership, Kyle responded “Definitely” then followed with “the way I function is again going back to how can I help you?” Phil responded similarly when he said, “think it’s someone who is inspirational in a way, leads people to want to make the changes in themselves first and then alongside the goals for the institution.” Peggy identified herself as a transformational leader but also responded, “I think there are time when you have to be transactional in this job, but then there’s a lot of opportunity to also be a visionary and be transformational.”

Finding Statement 1: Theme 3: At Times

Participants were also coded under the theme of “At Times” if their responses did not reflect an affirmative yes or no answer. Each sub-theme is listed in this section and contains participant examples and quotes further highlighting the emerging themes.

I try. Rich, Annie, and Vinny’s initial responses after being asked the question were “I try.” Rich said, “I try to be” and then mentioned, “I don’t know if I’ve reached that. I don’t think you ever.” Vinny said, “I would say I try to be a little. It’s ambitious.” After stating I try as her response, Annie reflected on her role this year and mentioned that she thinks, “I’m fairly responsive to the needs, and fairly thoughtful, but not knee-jerk, not reactive, but thoughtful.”

I hope. Nora and Samantha both responded immediately with the phrase “I hope” in response to the interview question. Samantha elaborated by stating, “While the leader has a big part in it, everybody plays a role in that process to keep each other going and inspire one another so that the transformations happen.” Nora responded with a question, “Can I say I hope I am?” when it comes to her self-perception of her own transformational leadership.

At times or maybe. Seven participants were coded under the heading “At times/Maybe” as a result of their response to whether or not they perceive themselves as being transformational leaders. After Paul’s initial response, he elaborated by stating, “I think at times you feel successful. At times you don’t. I think when you’re successful, I think naturally I feel there’s a natural transformation.” Gary reflected that he believed he possessed some of the qualities, and spoke about his philosophy of transformation for the students in his school. His goal is to have his students see different perspectives as they listen and contemplate different viewpoints. Robert’s response was “maybe, not a great one. I think people do a lot better job than I do.”

In response to the question, Margaret reflected and then stated, “I don’t really know what that necessarily means to say that.” After a short consideration, she mentioned that she is always striving to get better. Jason has learned a lot from experience, and his response of “at times” can from his reflection that he is more pragmatic than idealistic in how he approaches different facets of leadership. Erik admitted that he can be transactional in nature at times when the situation calls for it, and then reflected that he can also incorporate distributive leadership when needed. His perception was that both forms were subsets of transformational. Lucas’ response began with the statement, “I think transformational leadership is something we aspire to and it’s really left for other people to judge whether or not you did it.”

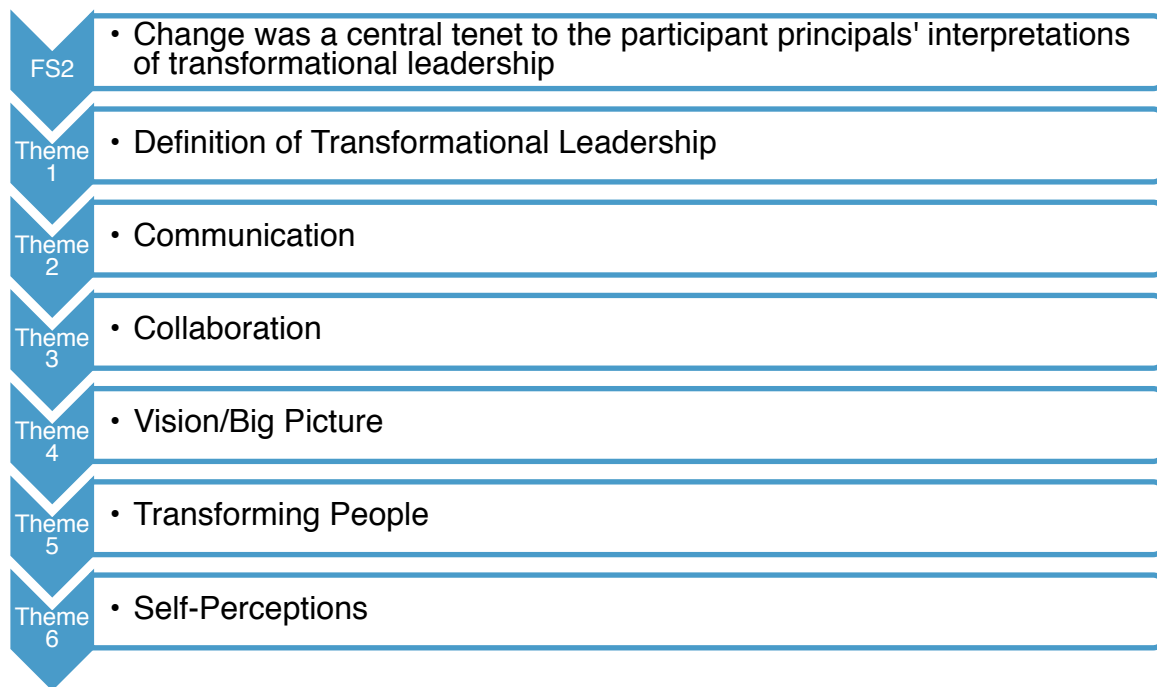


Figure 11. Finding Statement 2.

Figure 11 highlights the second finding statement and six themes found within the coding for the second finding statement. Change was a central tenet to participant principals’ perceptions of transformational leadership throughout the interview process. In their responses centered on change, participants mentioned the idea of change as it related to their definitions of

transformational leadership, communication, collaboration, vision/big picture, transforming people, and self-perceptions. The themes are discussed in the following section in further detail, with quotes and examples provided from the interview information.

Finding Statement 2: Theme 1: Definition of Transformational Leadership

The ability to transform people emerged during the interview responses. Jessica stated, “I think I’m transforming people.” At first, Nora was not sure she could define transformational leadership but that it had to do with her ability to “transform individuals, institutions, cultures, from where they are by working toward a shared vision and where we want to go.” Timothy also answered the question with references to the definition being about the ability to transform people, and stated that he is “trying to get people on board to change their thoughts, ideas, and practices.” Participants defined transformational leadership as elements that incorporated the change process, both with students, faculty, parents, and the larger school community. Rory described this as a metamorphosis that “requires lots of analysis, reflection, and thoughtful planning.”

Several interview participants mentioned that transformational leadership was a principals’ ability to transform the school culture and community. Samantha described transformational leadership as inspirational, while Anna commented that, “You are only as good as yesterday” in response to how she defined the term. Vinny’s response mentioned the change process in the effect it has on transforming the lives of the teachers and students in his building.

Emily believed that transformational leadership involved change, but additionally spoke about what the students and school community need to believe that there is the capacity for change. She highlighted that “Building a culture of students. Building a culture of teachers who believe they have the capacity and control to do things.” Peggy’s definition mirrored Emily’s

comments on her ability to change the school community and culture as a transformational leader. Timothy commented several technology initiatives as elements of change and said that in order to transform a school culture as a transformational leader he has to “try to get people on board to change their thoughts, ideas, and practices.”

Lucas and Rory each described transformational leadership as involving the change process, and Rory highlighted “it’s a metamorphosis that requires lots of analysis, reflection, and thoughtful planning.” Adam has embraced the concept of transformational leadership in his own career and commented to the researcher, “I’m just not built to do the same thing for 30 years.” Gary’s response when asked to define transformational leadership also led to the sub-code of “thinking outside the box.” He mentioned this as a means to get his faculty and staff towards feeling that they are supported in their efforts towards doing what is best for students.

Jason also answered the question with references to the definition being about the ability to transform people, and stated that he is “trying to transform practices to the point where we think they can be better.” Chris spoke about how he brings younger teachers in to model behaviors in order to help them transform their practices. He said, he is “trying to get people on board to change their thoughts, ideas, and practices.” In mentioning the word change during his initial response, Robert also stated that it is one of the great things about the profession because kids change every day and as a leader you cannot stay stagnant in your role. Vinny’s first sentence in response to the question was, “We are going to lead in a way that transforms people.” Henrik mentioned the idea of a dynamic change and reflected that you are “developing programs, where you’re looking essentially towards where you are now and more toward the future and where you need to go.”

Phil mentioned, “It’s with the eye towards making changes in the institution” as important to what transformational leadership is about. When asked to define transformational leadership, several participants highlighted that it revolved around leading from the front. Lucas stated that “it’s not top-down” while Annie stated that to her transformational leadership involved a “focus on continuous improvement.”

In his response to the interview question, Chris stated that he believed transformational leadership was “The principal being the model or the agent of change.” Jessica compared it to having lesson plans for her school, and her staff just as a teacher has lesson plans for their students. She sees that in her role as principal. Emily tries to build the capacity in her teachers to give them the confidence to try things professionally in order to build the culture and school community she seeks. The following section highlights the second theme of Finding Statement 2: communication.

Finding Statement 2: Theme 2: Communication

The first theme to emerge under Finding Statement 2 was communication. Sarah set up meetings when the schedule was being changed to make sure that her faculty were listened to and heard. Because of having a few meetings regarding this, the teachers became excited about the work they were doing. Vinny responded by talking about talking to his faculty in order to reach a middle ground on different school issues. Monica has taken the time to listen “deeply and think about relationships” as part of the ways in which she has worked to develop cooperative relationships with her staff. Anna has mentioned to her staff that if there is a problem, people should speak up, listen, and work to bridge the problem in order for student learning to improve. As Samantha met members of the school community, she listened and learned regarding the little elements that make a big effect. From her prior experience, if she

missed the small details, the negative effect on the faculty was tremendous. Margaret has conversations with different groups of people and “She listens to their concerns and hears things that she might not be aware of.”

Rory mentioned that he holds his staff accountable by having a direct, one-on-one conversation with anyone who he feels he needs to connect with to talk. Annie also stated that holding people accountable is one way that she walks the walk. By holding the adults in her school accountable, it reinforces the ability to hold students accountable as well.

Within the coding category of combination of ways in which participants felt they communicated, the role of technology emerged. The forms included a myriad of avenues, including blogs and social media. Rory utilized social media to connect with the school community, including teachers, parents, and students. He believed that using the tools social media can provide has proven to be an effective platform to broadcast events and news to a larger audience. Jody stated that she used email to make sure she communicated with her faculty, and Kyle was proud to display how his organized email system has led him to be an efficient school principal. Timothy utilized blogs in order to keep communication up to date, while Rich has instituted his presence on Twitter in order to keep the school community up to date. Adam also mentioned that social media has played a role in his ability to communicate with his faculty, and Gary reiterated this point when he mentioned his incorporation of a blog to start the following school year.

Participants also mentioned that the ability to use different venues to communicate has played a role in their ability to do so. Rich has instituted an informal breakfast with parents each month to speak in a different setting about topics concerning the school community. Chris spoke about helping his faculty work through appropriate phone communication with his faculty when

he began to realize this was an area of improvement for his staff. Peggy also utilized different venues within her school community, including faculty meetings and informal conversations, in order to communicate with her school community. Doug asked his faculty and leadership teams what they needed, and from these responses, a leadership cabinet was formed to help with the flow of information.

Henrik also spoke about his usage of different venues to communicate with his school community. In his question response, he mentioned faculty meeting, email, newsletters, and instructional effectiveness team meetings that take place in his building as modes of communication. Similarly, Rory sends press releases, emails, and utilizes social media outlets to keep contact with the local surrounding community. Nora also mentioned using a variety of venues; however, her response also included her ability to get into classrooms to observe and speak with faculty, as well as “meeting, talking, and having conversations.”

Gary also used different venues to communicate effectively, including a blog, lunches with the principal for students and parents, and making every effort to be as transparent as he possibly can be. Emily believed in the value of where different aspects of the school are physically located as an important piece of her ability to use all school elements to communicate with her faculty. Gary mentioned student and parent lunches, as well as using a blog as a “transformative communication piece” that he has implemented as principal. Kyle also used different venues to communicate with his faculty, including developing his weekly faculty meeting as an opportunity to address issues and concerns that his staff deals with during the year. Timothy sends out weekly updates to his school community every Friday and has developed a blog post. He also valued face time with his colleagues as an effective means of communication, and he sends out an update every Sunday to his faculty and staff to start the week off positively.

Rich also mentioned communication as part of the bigger picture when it comes to his vision for his school. His vision was counterintuitive to what the school was experiencing, and he spent time communicating to his faculty and staff. Henrik also mentioned that the vision must be communicated, and that “It’s more than just a document.” He has put the vision at the forefront of everything the school does, and this is done with his own “laser like focus.”

Annie also mentioned that the vision must be communicated, through reflection, open communication, and conversations. Jason also believed that the vision needed to be communicated, and he mentioned the mutual trust that is developed as one way to enhancing communication about the vision.

Adam experienced the negative side of communication when he had to terminate several employees, which was a challenging aspect of the change process for him. As a result, his vision began after the start of the school year. Nora had also communicated her vision in different ways, and it has led to interesting conversations. In particular, several surrounded the implementation of a service-learning program in line with the vision of the school. Margaret mentioned that she posts the vision as a mission statement throughout the school, while Kyle has reinforced the values of the school through the communication in different forums of the school’s vision and mission statement.

Emily also attempted to use different avenues towards developing communication within her building. In her view, she worked to change the culture of the school and this allowed positive communication to ensue. Rosalie commented that she would work on altering the daily schedule over the summer, while Robert pointed to the value of human contact in his proactive communication style. Jody stated that she tries to not let “any stone be unturned” in the avenues she utilizes for communication, while Gary stated that he makes every effort to be as transparent

as he can with his faculty. Anna has held workshops with teachers to model positive communication, while Kyle's servant leadership style means he used all possible options to work to communicate with this faculty. Timothy said he tries to communicate in as many different ways as possible, including email and face-to-face. Jessica utilizes her school's town hall meetings every Monday morning as a central tenet of her ability to communicate with her faculty.

The ideas of talking and listening were key aspects utilized as effective communication tools. Peggy mentioned, "We meet weekly so that helps. They come to me and we talk." Kyle's style of leadership, as he stated, was servant. In response to his communication style, he mentioned, "I'm actively asking them what they think." He has used weekly faculty meetings as a forum to do this. Lucas also mentioned a key to faculty meetings is the ability to talk and listen, and he mentioned that these opportunities help to set the direction of the school and in what he values as a principal. Phil has turned larger faculty meetings into smaller groups in order to give his staff an opportunity to talk and listen with fewer people. The makeup of the groups may vary depending on the needs from week to week. Phil also believed that "having too many (faculty meetings) does not work" and has attempted to generate the appropriate number of faculty meetings throughout the year.

Margaret saw the value of the newsletter, particularly when it came to highlighting the members of her community in a public way. She mentioned that her school employs a PR person to get the word out to a larger community about different school events taking place. In addition, she tries to highlight faculty and staff on the website as well. Samantha also mentioned that she has encouraged her faculty to utilize the newsletter system within their classrooms in

order to let families at home know what is going on. Jody also sends weekly email newsletters to her staff in order to make sure that they are all in the loop as well.

Emily's interview response mentioned that she has conversations with different school constituents in order to gain the correct knowledge needed to implement a school change. By constantly reiterating his message to faculty, Phil has found that the repetition has aided his ability to implement change. Margaret used this reiteration of an idea or thought as well, as she mentioned that she repeats agenda items on meeting itineraries in order to continue the conversation about elements of change.

Vinny also used communication in order to articulate his vision for his school. Each year he focuses on a theme and works to build consensus among his faculty through conversations. Jody has "asked for people's thoughts, opinions, this is where I'd like to go," when thinking about her vision within the broader school community. Jessica used conversations to discover what was on their minds, particularly through weekly team meetings. The communication allowed her to not "destroy a well-oiled machine" with her vision. Erik also mentioned communication when responding to the interview question and has incorporated the teachers when implementing change within his building.

Participants responded that conversations were another element allowed them to continue to empower and educate their faculty towards taking risks and experiments in the classroom and beyond. This was executed both through different conversations with school stakeholders and with various constituents within the broader school community. As part of his initial steps in laying out the groundwork, Doug mentioned that he meets with members of his faculty to start conversations in order to begin the process of enabling his staff to take risks. Lucas mentioned in his response that he tries to be a familiar presence in teachers' classrooms, and that this has

helped garner feedback and trust. Paul stated in his answer, “I think being visible and talking to people and knowing your staff enables you to motivate people to take risks...” Timothy used faculty meetings as an area to have conversations among faculty and gave them permission to try and fail through his dialogue with them.

Chris communicated the message to his faculty about taking risks by asking his faculty, “How do we inspire, motivate, and invigorate our students?” Rich has tried to enable his faculty to take risks by encouraging the group to have conversations and dialogue with their evaluators. Rory has used conversations with faculty to create trust and has relied on this element to empower his staff to take risks in his building. Annie uses individual conversations in order to “push them individually around risk-taking or trying things out instructionally, typically in post observation conferences.” Robert reflected in his answer that he utilizes conversations, but that “conversation is always about listening.” One of the first things that Anna mentioned in her response was that “In order for you (teacher) to be an effective educator who likes being in their classroom, you need to be able to take risks. You need to know that it’s safe to take risks.” Anna used conversation to communicate the message that it is safe for her faculty to take risks. Rosalie utilized feedback in combination with gaining people’s trust in order to support her faculty’s risk taking. Peggy also used feedback to help her faculty in order to continue aiding them in taking risks in the classroom for the betterment of the student body.

A central element of participant responses to the change process was the value of communication, especially conversations as a critical element of leadership. Annie provided an example of working to hire additional special education support staff in her building. She began by having multiple conversations with multiple people in order to gauge what the needs of her faculty were and to gather the information she needed. Doug incorporated the same strategy

regarding assessing the needs and concerns regarding his school's recess supervision problem. He began by being visible, doing walkthroughs, and engaging in conversations with people to understand fully the concern and the needs of his faculty. Through these steps, Doug was able to change the recess supervision protocol and policy, which eventually led him to make a larger curricular change in his building. Phil's immediate response to this interview question quickly centered on communication and conversations. His response focused around the changing technology and his staff's ability to incorporate it into their instructional lessons. Phil's belief is in constantly hitting them with the message that he wants, until the message becomes almost a branding mechanism. This allows his faculty to work through things that may still be a work in progress. Adam highlighted another element of the value of communication in the change process—to gain feedback on how implementation went after it is phased in to the building. His response took into account the belief that communication needs to be part of the change process both before, and after, the change is implemented. Adam said, "You gather feedback in a multitude of ways. By opening up different avenues of communication you start to find out what people are passionate about." With this response, Adam acknowledged that speaking with people during the change process is part of his transformational leadership style. The following section is the response to the third theme under Finding Statement 2—collaboration.

Finding Statement 2: Theme 3: Collaboration

The sub-theme of having time and building collaboration emerged from the interview responses. Vinny used the word compromise to describe the give and take he has worked on to find middle ground for his faculty in order to gain different perspectives while working to develop cooperative relationships. Erik mentioned in his response that he has allowed, "time for teachers to spend working with department heads," and that this has allowed for the building to

focus around a common planning time. Chris came into his school and knew that he needed to start with collaboration and mentioned in his response why teaching is secretive. He has encouraged his faculty to collaborate and “learn from each other to break that mold.” Rosalie mentioned in her interview response that “they are a pretty collaborative team,” and that she has created the space for her faculty to work together to tackle many of the requirements coming from the state.

Peggy spoke about her ability to create time with the parameters of her schedule as a means to make sure that “everyone had overlapping collaborative time every single week.” Adam also created time in the schedule to make it more efficient both for faculty and students, and he was able to embark on the change process due to the cooperative relationships he developed with the people in his building.

The participants’ ability to be authentic, and cautious, about how praise is given out emerged in the responses from two participants. Rory mentioned that, “not everybody praises or requires praise in the same respect, so you need to be able to know how to speak to people to motivate different qualities and characteristics.” Adam also mentioned in his interview response, “You always feel like if you praise one you’re offending others so I’m cautious about that. You’re cautious about that a little bit because you do want to promote as many people as you can.”

Rich created a program to enable teachers to nominate other teachers for the work they are doing in the building, and it has helped allow different faculty to shine where they might not have had a chance otherwise. Sarah highlighted that her praise for faculty is also a way of “Reassuring them.” Sarah mentioned that direct conversations, or ones that will take a negative tone, are done separately from the whole faculty setting. Anna used praise as a motivation for

her faculty, trying to be supportive in her conversations towards helping her faculty improve and grow. Gary has plans to implement a blog, which will incorporate praise for his faculty, and has given the idea of praise thought in the ways he interacts with the faculty.

Peggy, Lucas, and Kyle all placed value on faculty meetings as an outlet of effective communication within their schools. Peggy mentioned both weekly and team meetings that allow her staff the opportunity to share information. Lucas stated that he was using his faculty meetings as the “bully pulpit,” while Kyle mentioned that his faculty “get a chance to say what’s on their mind about a particular issue.” Kyle also stated that his faculty have the opportunity to add items to the meeting agenda, which has allowed his staff to be heard during weekly meetings. He believed in the rule of three when communicating with people and has attempted to use the strategy in his work with his faculty. Ultimately, he acknowledged that he has the final say. He has attempted to ensure that his faculty have an opportunity to have their points heard.

The collaboration of her student body was the first thing that came to Anna’s mind when speaking about implementing change, and she highlighted the idea that her school is working towards encouraging students to communicate face-to-face as opposed to behind a screen. Participants mentioned the collaborative process as a key element towards their ability to implement change in their schools. Peggy brings the problem to her team in order to generate the best solution among the group. Jason’s response to the interview question highlighted his ability to communicate with his team in order to build credibility and mentioned that most change involves some type of compromise along the way. Rich and Adam both mentioned that as they begin looming changes in their schools, they would recruit a committee in order to take a look at the proposal from all angles.

Samantha is a firm believer in the collaborative process to initiate change and mentioned that she makes sure she has an opposing point of view on each grade level team in order to have all sides of an issue considered. Henrik's response reflected his ability to assemble a team of teachers in order to work collaboratively throughout the change process. Erik also reiterated this thought, and he mentioned that he works to get all teachers involved in the process to build "change capacity." Robert reflected his ability to involve the school community in the change process in order to pull various school constituents into the collaboration.

Anna gives teachers ownership during collaborative moments in order to have teachers create opportunities. She mentioned this example in reference to working with her faculty towards creating a vertical curriculum alignment in her building. Margaret constantly reminds people of change during the change process in order to ensure that it is on people's radar. Rosalie mentioned that most change evolves from her faculty and admitted that it would be a more difficult task to implement if it came directly from her.

The sub-theme of collaboration emerged from the interview questions when participants reflected on their visions as leaders. Robert's immediate response to the interview question was that "vision for me is collaborative." The relationships that Samantha has developed with people have allowed her to transform the culture in her building towards a more collaborative one, and she has developed systems so that teachers are focused on the kids. Peggy mentioned that is important to have the entire team on her side, and her ability to relate to them as a teacher has moved her school into a more collaborative environment. Timothy mentioned that he "tries to be as collaborative as possible," while Phil has worked to lay out the school's curriculum, which has led to increased communication and collaboration among his faculty.

Erik has collaborated with his faculty, and stated, “I really think it’s important for the teachers to be in the decision-making process of the school.” One of Jessica’s goals for the year is to “listen and learn” and this has helped her to ‘live’ her building in her role. As she mentioned, “No, you don’t need to start all over again. You fix what can be fixed but you keep that mission going.” One thing that Vinny is always trying to do is “build consensus,” while Gary has worked to make sure the voices of his department heads are heard and have a voice. Doug played a game with his faculty, asking them to put fake money into the bucket labeled with the area where they thought the money should be spent. This enabled him to begin to work with his faculty to collaborate with a shared vision in mind.

Adam put together a committee prior to changing the schedule in his school in order to make sure he saw the change from different angles. When Margaret and Robert were posed the question, their responses were immediately ones of collaboration within their buildings. She likes people to have a voice when it comes to being involved with the change process, and constantly reminds people via meeting agendas of the pending change. She mentioned, “I would get a handful of players involved, other people to be on my team to do the work. I believe in consensus but I also believe I am the final. Somebody’s got to make decisions.” Peggy’s response to the same question mirrored Margaret’s response. Although she actively establishes a collaborative team approach to the change process, she acknowledges that as the building principal she is the final decision maker. As building leaders, participants overall believed in allowing teachers to have a voice, while realizing that they are ultimately the final say and decision maker in the building.

Anna took her response one step further when she cited how she would like her teachers to instill collaboration for their students in the classroom. She mentioned,

We want them (students) to be able to talk to each other, to look each other in the eye.

All of those collaboration things that we're talking about that these companies are

looking for, we're trying to create that opportunity for them.

As a principal, Anna's response acknowledges the human side of the change process when it comes to incorporating a collaborative mindset in her building. Rosalie sees herself as a facilitator of change and allows her faculty the opportunity to work collaboratively throughout the change process. "It starts with them and then they work together in small teams to come up with different fixes and then bring it together as a whole group. I'm really more of a facilitator," Rosalie stated. Through the interview responses, participants actively recognized the value of the human element throughout the change process in their buildings. This involves the incorporation of trust, communication, collaboration, and their own self-reflection along the way. The next section highlights the theme of having a vision and seeing the big picture under Finding Statement 2.

Finding Statement 2: Theme 4: Vision or Big Picture

One sub theme that emerged was the idea of transformational leadership as being flexible and ever changing in relationship to participants' abilities to see the big picture/have a vision. Anna mentioned that she is aware of what is happening and what is around her, always flexible to the broader school community. Annie's first two words in response to the question were "flexible" and "ever-changing." Monica and Robert both spoke about the change process as an element of transformational leadership, while Rory described transformational leadership as a "metamorphosis." Robert's response also spoke of change, and he added that it is about "How do you get people to think about how to get better? How do we improve, how do we shift whatever's happening?" Adam reflected and mentioned that learning a school community in

order to help it grow and improve takes time, and it is with this “vision to look ahead and not rely on, maybe, what you feel you’ve accomplished in days or years past” that Adam has enjoyed about his role as principal.

Jason and Anna each stated that they were deficient in that they want things to be perfect while maintaining a clear vision for the future. Anna mentioned that her listening skills are an area she is deficient in, and she is actively working on this area as she recognizes that her faculty’s feedback can reflect the fact that things are not perfect with a vision for the future. Jason admitted that he tends to be a “perfectionist” and procrastinates to make sure things are perfect before he moves forward.

Regarding the vision, Paul responded by stating, “You verbalize it constantly.” Rory has worked to create a flowchart of communication in his school that has aimed at providing concrete communication and intentional collaboration within his building. Nora has also worked to generate conversations with her faculty regarding the vision, including several curricular changes that were made to the overall structure in recent years. Peggy used her background as a teacher to relate to her staff, and she also “interviewed everybody, built a lot of trust...” Rich mentioned, “His vision also had a lot to do with a climate of openness. He has always said to them ‘If you have a question, you come see me because I’ll talk to you about it.’” Monica utilized communication among her faculty in order to get a sense of what her school valued. She stated, “from the conversations and meetings, themes began to emerge which helped her form her direction for the school.”

Jason responded to the interview question by stating, “I think one of the most important things to learn the culture of the school. You don’t have to make any changes unless they are hitting you in the face.” Adam valued the school culture and community after he terminated

several employees, but he ultimately kept the bigger picture of the overall school community in mind. Lucas mentioned the ripple effect that the vision of his superintendent has trickled down to the rest of the district, and some members of the community have taken time to get on board with the vision.

Within the theme of the bigger picture, the sub-theme of school vision/mission emerged from the participant interview responses. Lucas mentioned that he has developed his mission from the work of his superintendent and has utilized it to incorporate a ripple effect in his building. Henrik mentioned that the vision he speaks about is “really just trying to focus on what’s important, which is teaching and learning.” Chris mentioned the mission of the school in his response, and that the vision is manifested in the minute details in the school building. Nora mentioned that she supported her Head of School’s vision, and that has guided her work in her building. Margaret has turned her vision into a mission statement that is posted prominently throughout the school, while Kyle has reinforced the vision and mission of his school throughout all forums available to him within the school community.

Principals also believe that transformational involves having a vision for the future and ensuring that the right systems, people, and structures are in place in order to reach their full potential. Participants’ responses were coded into two categories: the human element and the bigger picture. Within the bigger picture coding category, human elements began to emerge which further emphasized the importance of building relationships with people, creating a positive school culture, and communicating efficiently. When asked about his vision, Jason mentioned that he articulates his belief system when speaking with the faculty in an effort to create mutual respect. Chris responded to the same question by referring back to the school mission statement. He mentioned that it is “why we’re here and what we’re doing. That’s the

whole big picture.” Lucas uses the framework that his superintendent worked to develop, and stated, “...that really became the frame by which I entered the organization.” This has had a ripple effect on his building, and Lucas recognized that he had to work on this as the year continued.

Chris has provided his faculty with helpful reading materials to encourage them to continue taking risks, while Erik mentioned providing training to his staff in areas they identify as potentially working to take a risk or in which to experiment. Annie uses conversations as her approach to empowering the faculty in her building towards taking risks, while Jessica mentioned that she has individuals and groups of her staff speak at faculty meetings regarding instructional elements they have implemented and whether or not the approach was successful or not. Gary responded to the interview question by saying that he enables his faculty to take risks with “fatherly care and understanding” while Anna utilizes goals and conversations with her staff to encourage them to experiment in their classrooms. The following section highlights the fifth theme under Finding Statement 2: transforming people.

Finding Statement 2: Theme 5: Transforming People

Participants’ responses highlighted their perceptions of being able to transform people in their role as school leaders. Sarah has empowered the faculty to work towards developing a more effective school schedule. As she mentioned, “People wanted to be involved, she recognized that, and allowed them the opportunity to do so.” Adam also worked to change his school schedule, and he stated that “...if many of your decisions work out for the greater good, you’re just brining more and more people with you in terms of their beliefs in you.”

The ability to transform people emerged during the interview responses. Jessica stated, “I think I’m transforming people.” At first, Nora was not sure she could define transformational

leadership but that that it had to do with her ability to “transform individuals, institutions, cultures, from where they are by working toward a shared vision and where we want to go.”

Timothy also answered the question with references to the definition being about the ability to transform people and stated that he is “trying to get people on board to change their thoughts, ideas, and practices.”

Jason also answered the question with references to the definition being about the ability to transform people and stated that he is “trying to get them to believe they can be better.” Chris spoke about how he brings younger teachers in to model behaviors in order to help them transform their practices. He said, he is “trying to get people on board to change their thoughts, ideas, and practices.” In mentioning the word change during his initial response, Robert also stated that it is one of the great things about the profession because kids change every day and as a leader you cannot stay stagnant in your role. Vinny’s first sentence in response to the question was “We are going to lead in a way that transforms people.” Henrik mentioned the idea of a dynamic change and reflected that part of this is that it transforms people.” Phil mentioned that transformational leadership is about “It’s with the eye towards making changes in the institution.”

Jody worked to meet the larger community where they were most comfortable and accessible to the information she was trying to share. If some groups want the information sent via email, while others prefer a text message, she is willing to help accommodate either option. As principal, she has acknowledged that different groups within her school community need access to information using different platforms. Principals’ understandings of the changes taking place within education regarding technology have begun to utilize it within their schools to reach a larger population of their school community. Samantha mentioned that she advocates for her

faculty to communicate, and specifically highlighted the weekly newsletter when she stated, “I would bet that most of them never look at it, but it doesn’t matter because they get something in their mailbox from Samantha. It’s the perception of being in touch.”

Five participants spoke about accountability as it relates to their role as school leaders. Kyle mentioned that he held his staff accountable to reading and responding to emails, which was a missing responsibility for his faculty prior to his arrival as principal. One way that Phil has held his staff accountable is that in faculty meetings, he has adopted the motto “We are not going to punish the punctual.” His faculty meetings begin on time, and he commented that as a result, more people have arrived in a timely manner. Sarah highlighted bringing a group of her staff together to discuss how and why a mistake had been made. In holding a brief meeting with the group, she stated that each person was held accountable for the actions that occurred.

Three participants spoke about different programming options that they have used in order to praise their faculty. Henrik and Timothy both used the 212 stickers to acknowledge faculty that have gone above and beyond in their role in their schools. Robert has helped his faculty feel empowered to present in front of faculty and students and has used this as an avenue of praise with his staff.

Paul encouraged his faculty to take risks by identifying people who he feels may want to try new opportunities and hooks them into attempting the new opportunity. Timothy mentioned that he has said to his faculty “I did this, and it still didn’t work. We can adjust.” Chris’ response to the interview question mentioned the idea of failure, and he mentioned that, “You don’t know unless possibly there is a failure.” Henrik mentioned that he has two new assistant principals this year who he is working with to challenge and encourage them. He has tried to

balance pushing them while simultaneously supporting them as they learn the nuisances of their new roles.

Participants were coded with a “try it attitude” when their responses elicited a response that indicated they encourage a culture of “give it a try.” Doug pointed out “education is about trying different things, figuring out what works, and then going from that.” Peggy uses the word “pilot” in order to allow her faculty the opportunity to try new things. Samantha said that she works to empower her teachers and has learned this from her experience in the daily aspects of the job. Samantha has created the try it attitude from building relationships with her teachers, and which means that they “feel comfortable taking risks.”

Lucas, a high school principal participant, eliminated midterms in his high school. This took time, energy, and an investment on his part of human resources. He stated that in order to do this, “You’d better know who you are and what you want to do.” Although he was clear that the purpose behind the change was in the best interests of his students, it was not an action step that would take place over night. In an attempt to move towards a performance-based assessment, he also put himself out there as a leader in front of his staff. During a faculty meeting where the change was being discussed he said to his faculty, “If this bombs and you’re right, how many of you are tenured? Just about every hand went up. I said, ‘I’m not, so they’re going to get rid of me.’” As a cornerstone of transformational leadership, Lucas met the change process head on, as he worked to develop his school’s midterm testing procedures.

Jessica responded that her belief was that she is working to transform people into being the best they can possibly be. Nora commented, “I think it has to do with the idea that my job is not to manage people but to transform individuals, institutions, cultures, from where they are by working toward a shared vision and where we want to go.” As the school leaders interviewed

throughout about this particular element of leadership, their responses revolved around the people they worked regarding their ability to consider themselves transformational leaders. Jody's experience as a principal has centered entirely around the change process, and it has been all she has done throughout her career. From her experience, Jody could not sit back and wait for things to happen. She had to get people on board and understand their perspective to determine a plan of how to get where they wanted to be. Lucas echoed this statement when thinking about his own transformational leadership, and stated, "It's not top-down."

Participants perceive that being visible within their buildings has allowed them to enable faculty members to take risk and experiment in the classroom. By being visible, this has allowed participants to continue fostering conversations and discussions allowing their faculty members to take risks. Rosalie mentioned that she tries to be in as many classrooms as possible, and this allows her to be visible to her staff as well as giving her a chance to have face-to-face conversations with people. Rich also spent time in classrooms, and in doing so attempted to model the interactions and behaviors he expects from his faculty. Lucas stated, "I try to be a familiar presence in the classroom," while Paul mentioned that, "I think being visible and talking to people and knowing your staff enables you to motivate people to take risks." Chris also mentioned that he tries to be visible in classrooms and within the building in order to encourage and motivate his faculty to experiment and take risks in the classroom.

Peggy mentioned that in her building she uses the word 'pilot' for programs and changes that she is encouraging her staff to take. As Peggy stated,

Pilot is a good one. We do that and we do a pilot and reflection. Let's try it. Let's try it. Let's see how it goes and asking them to be a part of the problem solving process so that they are encouraged and empowered to do it and to give really truthful feedback.

As participants mentioned, one of the human elements of allowing their staff to take risks and experiment is the ability to allow for trusting relationships to develop among the faculty at the school.

Rosalie worked to build trust within her building in order for them to feel supported and able to actively reflect when plans do not go as expected. As she said, “It took two years of building trust about, ‘Let’s try this’ and having those feedback discussions as opposed to making it about, ‘Oh that didn’t work so you’re done.’” Building trust through relationships with faculty in the building was cited as a reason as to why teachers are more likely to take risks in the classroom and in their profession.

Jody came into her current school building and recognized that she needed to shift the culture immediately. As she stated, “she couldn’t sit back and wait for things to happen, she had to do them herself.” Timothy also stated that he has had to look at the old habits of his faculty and change the mentality of “that’s just how it’s always been done.” Margaret mentioned that transformational leadership follows a “similar pattern or cycle as teaching does” and that she sometimes goes back to the reasons she was initially hired as a way to get back to basics in her role. The following section highlights the sixth theme that emerged from Finding Statement 2: self-perceptions.

Finding Statement 2: Theme 6: Self-Perceptions

The sixth theme that emerged was self-perceptions. Participants were reflective of their transformational leadership experiences throughout the interview questions. Henrik and Jessica cited deadlines and the challenges that the schedule and calendar present as being an area in which they were both deficient. As Henrik admitted, sometimes he’s “calendar challenged.” He also mentioned, “There’s so much going on and having a vision for every single thing and trying

not to miss anything.” He was also reflective of the fact that he has to keep a balance between his responsibilities in order to make sure he is paying attention to the details that can sometimes get lost. Jessica also cited challenges of the calendar as an area of leadership that she is deficient in, and her comment was that “she can’t duck like an assistant principal can.” For her, staying on top of deadlines has proven to be a challenge.

Several participants mentioned that they are still learning as they go through their roles as principal. Jody has worked to continue honing her interview skills, which have improved over the course of her time in her role. Adam has worked on several elements, including technology and creating a broader, more universal language for his faculty to all utilize. Annie has worked to get used to the new teacher evaluation plan, and as she becomes familiar with its format has begun to push back on her teachers. Anna tries to “keep her ear to the ground” and tries to make sure her faculty are heard. Sarah found she was deficient in working with the board of education and superintendent, along with the budget, and she admitted, “Some of it is just a process of learning as you go.”

Jody and Robert both mentioned leadership books as the lens through which they see the quotes, mantras, and books that inspire and motivate them. Robert highlighted many different books, but he mentioned that the lens through which he sees things, and what he intentionally looks for, is leadership. Jody also mentioned a book involving leadership, which she has gone back to reread several times throughout her career. Samantha and Monica each mentioned change books as an avenue for which they view books, lyrics, or mantras that inspire or motivate them. Samantha mentioned a variety of authors and books that centered on the elements of change.

The first book that Monica mentioned when asked a question about books or other sources that keep her inspired was Robert Evans *The Human Side of School Change*, which she has read several times throughout her career. Robert and Lucas' responses to the interview question focused on books, but did not emerge as being either in the leadership or change categories. Lucas mentioned the book of Ecclesiastes and then stated the quote, "There is nothing new under the sun" as a guiding philosophy that motivates him. Robert's interview response mentioned several figures in English literature, including Atticus Finch from *To Kill a Mockingbird* and Peter Senge. Each of their responses to the interview question was not coded in the other categories, as they did not fit among the other participant responses.

Nora, Gary, and Chris each highlighted different mantras they were motivated by in response to the interview question. Gary is a second-degree black belt, and in his interview question response, he mentioned Ishnu Karate. He then followed up with the mantra of "Whole Heart, or One Heart" as the philosophy that he follows. Nora responded to the interview question with the phrase "Comparison is the thief of joy," while Chris answered that he is a follower of Stephen Covey's *Principles of Leadership*. Chris wants his faculty to see him as a "leader, as honest, as innovative" in his role as principal.

Lucas immediately stated that, "You'd better know who you are and what you want to do" in response to the interview question. He believed in having the ability as a principal to know being comfortable with who you are as an element of his ability to implement change in his building. Timothy also reiterated the ability to be comfortable, as a leader has allowed him to gain credibility among his faculty. Jessica's ability to reflect as a leader has allowed her to work through the steps of change with her faculty while remembering that she is ultimately the leader of the building and therefore the final decision maker. Doug began with a conversation but

mentioned utilizing a self-reflective process in order to implement change within his building. Paul learned from prior experiences and has begun to empathize with people during the change process, as he has continued to recognize that ultimately change involves working with people.

Participants spoke about the speed of implementation during the change process in their responses. Paul has learned this leadership lesson over time and has actively attempted to slow things down while implementing change within his building. He recognized the human element of empathy regarding the role and responsibility of the classroom teacher. Paul worked to make sure teachers are heard, particularly regarding the change process in his school. His faculty cited a lack of time during one particular change, and as a leader, he reflected that, “there’s just a lot going on and there’s less time and there’s a lot more expected. If you don’t recognize that and then move through it, you’re not going to get anywhere.” Paul’s ability as a leader to reflect on the human element of his faculty members has led him to slow down the speed of implementation during the change process.

Vinny mentioned several aspects of the change process in his interview; however, he stated that he has worked to involve people in the change process and reflected on the fact that just because he does not take action in line with his faculty does not mean that as a group they were not heard. Doug was also self-reflective in nature as he responded to the interview question when it came to adding quotes each month to his newsletter. He received positive feedback from his selections and has begun to realize that the little things do make a big difference. What inspires Kyle is when he observes the behaviors in students that he has worked to develop within his building, and he provided an example of a group of students who greeted community members one morning in Kyle’s absence. Beyond rereading thank you notes from former

students, Rosalie mentioned that it is the positive feedback from school community members that has helped her to keep going on difficult days.

The code of staying current emerged as principals' perceptions of how they continue to challenge themselves as principals. Peggy began her interview response by saying, "I always need to be current," while Sarah's work in her role as interim principal excited her to stay current, and she commented to her secretary that, "I feel like a first-year teacher again." Samantha tries to stay current in trying to imagine what school might look like in 20 years, and she worked to have several of these resonate with her faculty.

Emily and Adam both mentioned the use of technology, and social media, as avenues in which they continue to challenge themselves as leaders. Adam has tried to role model appropriate usage of technology, specifically as it relates to social media. Although it can be challenging and overwhelming at times, he thinks, "it's one of the best things I've ever done because I'm in their world." Emily mentioned that trying new things is her New Year's resolution, and as a result she has found herself doing some "fun and stupid" things in recent years.

Nora responded by saying that one thing "she tries to do is things that she's afraid to do." She applied this to her role in school and has used it to learn about her building from the inside out. Margaret tries to stay current by simply doing whatever her teachers are doing and paying attention to that as a foundation. Chris earned his doctorate several years ago and shared the following advice in his interview response. "The doctorate is an honor. You've earned it. At the same time, if I go to my dentist, I don't want him doing root canal based upon the procedures he learned in 1975, right?"

Several participants referenced books, or different reading materials, in their responses. Chris began by stating, “keep reading books, but who has time?” Sarah mentioned the books *Cage Busters* and *Most Likely to Succeed* as books that have helped her continue to challenge herself as a leader. Adam mentioned that his superintendent shares articles and books to read, which has been helpful to him and his faculty. Margaret referenced reading the newspapers, but she stated that she is always cutting articles out to share with her colleagues. Nora kept Carol Dweck’s growth mindset research in mind as she worked through teaching her first ninth grade English class. She also created a class for parents of her school to educate them on different topics throughout the year, which was not something she was comfortable with when the idea first formulated. Lucas mentioned that he found Michael Fullan’s work to be “invaluable.” Peggy stated that she is “constantly reading and learning,” and she emphasized needing to stay current and aware of public school initiatives despite being a private school employee.

One challenge theme that emerged was staying on top of the day to day within a school, and a sub-theme that emerged was maintaining balance. Sarah spoke about balance in her response, not just for herself but for her faculty as well. As she said, “That’s why a lot of what I talked about with the staff was just balance, because being imbalanced is not healthy.” Timothy mentioned that he “feels like he’s playing catch-up” and that right now it is “more day to day things” that are challenging him in his role as principal. Margaret struggled with delegating, and she recognized that she needs to give more responsibility to her assistant principals in order to achieve balance in her role. Phil also has worked to maintain balance in his role, particularly when it comes to communication and acknowledgment of his faculty for the work they do. Jody also was challenged with maintaining a balance, and in her interview response, she cited several

different areas of school life that she is working to have a better handle on within the purview of her role.

Several participants mentioned the idea of being “bogged down” in their role on a daily basis, and for them, the challenge was to emerge from this to create a better balance for themselves and their schools. Margaret spoke about delegating, and how she needs to give more responsibility to her assistant principals not only so that they feel empowered but also so that she does not get bogged down by her role as principal. Jody mentioned several different aspects of her role as areas which continue to challenge her, including having a better handle on technology, curriculum, and honing in on her interview acumen. In her response, she mentioned that the summer months are spent searching for resources, but she sometimes does not know what she is looking for in her search. The following section highlights Finding Statement 3: the human elements of leadership were a central tenet to the participant principals’ perceptions of transformational leadership.

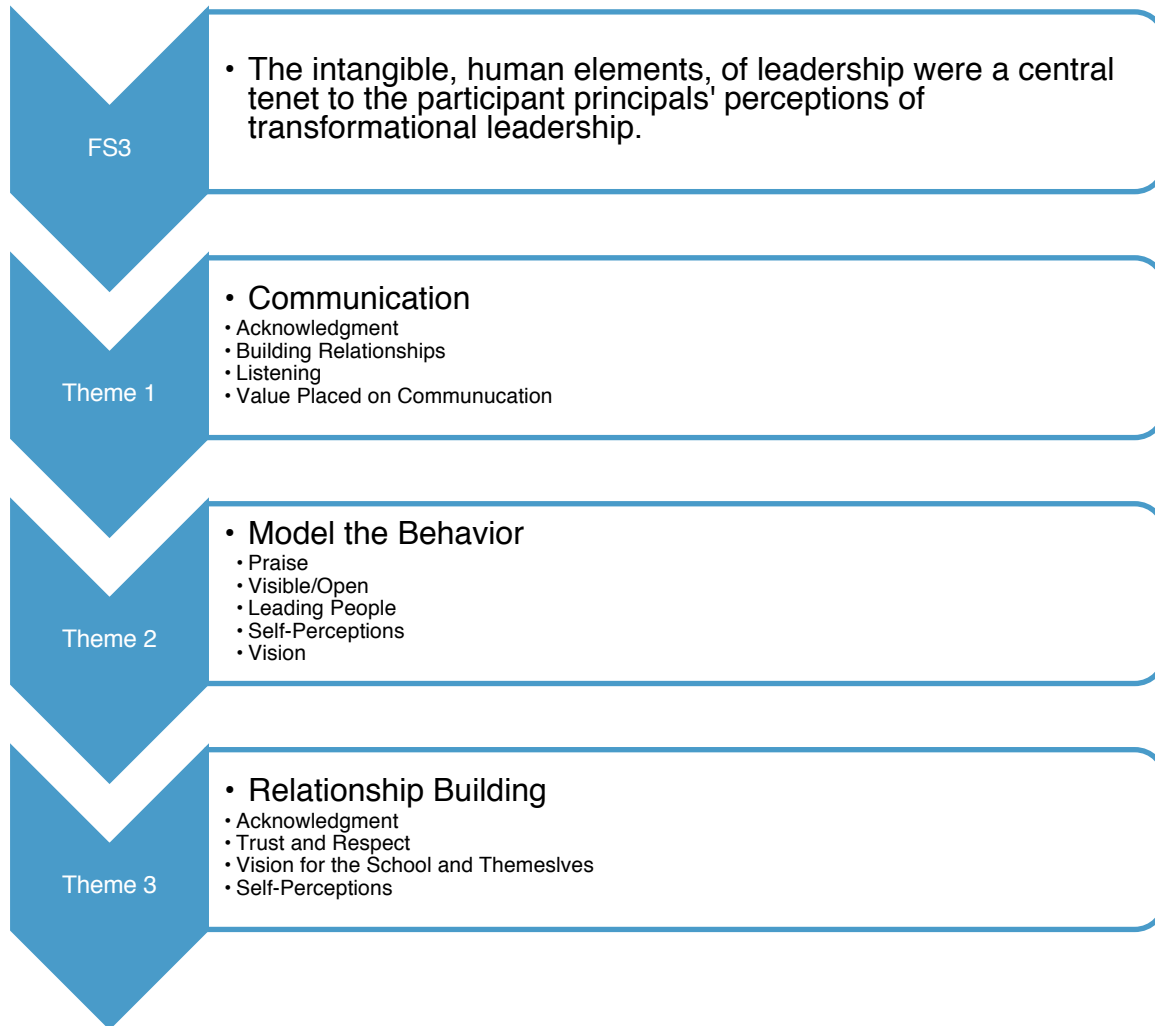


Figure 12. Finding Statement 3.

Figure 12 highlights the third finding statement and three themes. The third finding statement was that the intangible, human elements of leadership were a central tenet to the participant principals' perceptions of transformational leadership. The first theme was communication, with sub-themes of acknowledgment, building relationships, listening, and value placed on communication falling within the coding of the first theme. The second theme was model the behavior, with sub-themes of praise, being visible and open, leading people, self-perceptions, and vision falling within the coding of the second theme. The third theme was relationship building, with sub-themes of acknowledgement, trust and respect, vision for the

school and themselves, and self-perceptions falling under the coding of the third theme. The sections below highlight each theme, and sub-theme, using participant quotes and examples.

Finding Statement 3: Theme 1: Communication

The first theme that emerged from the data analysis was communication. Participants spoke about ways in which they used different forms of communication to work with their faculty. The categories of acknowledgment, building relationships, listening, and the value placed on communication as a tenet of leadership resulted in sub-themes that emerged from the data analysis.

Participants responded that communication and conversations were prevalent in their roles as school leaders. Annie talks to people in order to get the information she needs right up front. Jason mentioned his ability to have “normal conversations” with his faculty in order to talk about “normal things” in an informal setting as a means he uses when starting to implement change, similar to Doug’s response of beginning with conversations with faculty members. In her interview response, Sarah spoke about how she has used effective communication to garner feedback from her faculty.

Participants mentioned the idea of being proactive, visible, and transparent in their communication with families as ways in which they feel they are effective within their school communities. Chris’ response to the question highlighted the fact that he wants his faculty to continue to work on this aspect of communication particularly when dealing with their interactions with parents. Sarah said, “You want all the people to have all the information.” Monica’s transparency began at her first faculty meeting when she compared her communication style to a game of Marco Polo. Henrik also reiterated the idea of being proactive in his communication style when he stated, “the adage is always to over communicate.” Phil’s

communication style has been an area of growth for him, and his response highlighted his ability to use different venues in order to be transparent with his faculty. Adam has encouraged his faculty to visit each other's classrooms in order to see their peers in a creative way to learn from them.

The importance communication plays in for a school principal was highlighted in the participants' responses. Phil's response to the interview question highlighted that this has been an area of personal growth for him, and he has learned the value of a balance in communication among his staff. Electronic communication allows participants to reach their faculty more immediately, and Rich mentioned that he sends out email blasts to his staff in lieu of holding formal faculty meetings. He said,

For the staff, I think one of the things that they've liked about my communication is I don't waste their time. If I had nothing to talk about in a faculty meeting that can't be said in an email, I don't have it."

Rich's response indicates that he is cognizant of his not wasting his faculty's time on elements that can be shared electronically.

The use of technology through different mediums was consistent regarding promoting positive leadership, and among these the value and honesty of these interactions were core to the responses. Chris spoke of this when he responded about how he speaks to his faculty about the importance of the communication with parents. He has told his faculty to use the phrase "partnering with parents" when addressing them and to reiterate this message when speaking with parents. By doing so, he has added value and meaning to the importance of communication with this particular group of the school community.

Peggy valued communication in her interview response, and along with sending out weekly emails to faculty and staff, she also runs interference between parents and teachers. Kyle also found value in communication within his school building. His philosophy is one of servant leadership, and he used this lens to guide his interactions with faculty, students, and parents. He tries to keep everyone informed, including remaining organized regarding his email system. Annie mentioned that she believed in consistency when dealing with communication, and the lack of consistency leads to confusion and misunderstandings. Erik mentioned that part of effective communication for him has been listening to what teachers are really saying. This builds understanding, trust, and allows faculty members to feel valued in his school.

In her interview response, Sarah mentioned using different means towards communicating with her faculty and began by stating, “You want all the people to have all the information.” Samantha’s comment was similar to Sarah’s, as she acknowledged that people have many different things going on, but Samantha makes every attempt to make sure her school community is aware of what’s happening. Phil mentioned several different ways in which he communicates with his school community, including email, professional community time, and small group faculty meetings. Adam had many of the same comments but also added in that he encourages his faculty to get into their peers’ classrooms to see firsthand what is going on, and to use it as an opportunity to connect, learn, and grow. The following section highlights participants’ responses, which pertained to their ability to praise, or acknowledge, their faculty and staff in their roles as transformational leaders.

Acknowledgment. Within the theme of communication, participants spoke about the value communication has when acknowledging or praising faculty for the work that they do. Timothy mentioned the value to having conversations with people in order to praise them,

particularly if he witnessed the positive behavior himself. Monica mentioned that she perceives herself as expressing her gratitude to her faculty, and said, “I talk about how much I appreciate their presence at this school all the time.” Doug also has face-to-face conversations with his faculty to acknowledge their good work, and stated, “The informal conversation is probably more the way I go about it.” Peggy mentioned that she tries to praise her faculty for the good work they do, and constantly tells them that they are valued.

Phil tried to acknowledge and praise faculty in the moment, and although he reads emails, he tries to get as much out to families through newsletters and other avenues as he can. Vinny used a combination of factors, including emails, stopping by to say thank you in person, and including relevant information in his weekly memo to the school community. Emily has used praise as an opportunity for her faculty to grow and has used different forums to express this to her faculty members. She has discussions with staff about opportunities of growth and in an acknowledgment encourages them to participate.

Three participants focused on having their faculty present at a faculty meeting or other forum in order to communicate their praise. Sarah gives “shout outs” to her faculty at every faculty meeting, and this is done through a slideshow that visually highlights positive feedback. Jason mentioned, “It’s not direct praise in the sense but they know when I have them present something at a faculty meeting that is outstanding.” Rich has his faculty present at meetings after they have implemented something new in the classroom in that it “allows them to shine” among their peers.

The theme of acknowledgement, in either a good or bad sense, emerged from the participants’ words as well during the qualitative interview process. The response highlighted various aspects of participants’ roles, including the idea of caring about people, time, and

conversations participants have within their school communities. For example, Phil stated that one of his deficiencies was praising people for the work they do, and communication. In particular, he seemed to feel deficient in being clear so that all stakeholders clearly understand. He has found this to be a work in progress. Robert mentioned that he wants everyone to get better at what they are doing, but did mention that he believed in talking things out with this faculty to try to see how he could help his staff get to where they need to be. On the other hand, Erik reflected that he has to work on being succinct in challenging situations, while being respectful to the person on the receiving end of the challenging conversation.

Timothy used a combination of means in order to communicate praise with his faculty. Margaret praised people in the hallway, verbally in person, during faculty meetings, and by writing thank you letters to teachers acknowledging them for their work. Chris leaves notes in teachers' mailboxes, speaks to them directly, and uses an app to communicate with his faculty after informal observations. Robert wants to ensure that the praise he is giving is authentic and finds a meaningful way to do so. He approached people in person to say that they are doing a good job, but also mentioned that he has modeled the behavior expected from his faculty regarding how they go about praising each other.

Samantha valued face-to-face conversations when providing her faculty with praise, and her immediate response to the interview question was "face-to-face." She also mentioned that several of her teachers do not like to be acknowledged in front of their peers, so she tends to praise people face-to-face. Nora mentioned the influence of having face-to-face conversations with her faculty and has worked to develop this skill as it relates to her ability to terminate members of her school community. She spoke about how her supervisor has helped guide her towards developing the skills in conversations to have difficult discussions with employees.

Robert mentioned the value of face-to-face conversations when he praised his faculty, and he mentioned that he tries to thank people privately to let them know they have performed well. Jody also recognized her faculty publically, and she thanks them personally as well. Henrik has guided his leadership team on how he would like them to work on thanking the faculty, and he has mentioned specific strategies so that they are providing appropriate feedback. Annie also praises people publically, but is careful to praise teams of people rather than individuals.

Jessica mentioned that she would praise her faculty by writing an email and including a copy in a person's file. She also highlighted the fact that she tries to mention people at meetings or when she comes across them in the building. Henrik also praised people by a combination of factors, which include face-to-face and in various written formats. He has begun putting "thank you's" at the top of his meeting agendas and has incorporated the "212" stickers to recognize positive performances. Rory spoke about how he has realized that not everyone wants praise or requires praise, and that he has learned to balance how and when he gives acknowledgements to people. Rory has given people different opportunities in his building in-person, including presenting at faculty meetings and allowing his staff the time to visit colleagues' classrooms.

Listen. Participants' responses mentioned their ability to listen to their faculty as a component of communication. Rosalie's response mirrored Erik's regarding the value of listening as an important element of communication. She stated, "I listen a lot, because I think that's super important. I want them to be able to listen a lot too." Sarah and Peggy both utilized the skill of listening to their faculty in their roles as principals. In doing so, they were able to relate to a larger number of their staffs. As Paul stated, the skill of listening to his faculty in his role as principal was important. Annie highlighted a recent emergency event within her building where she consciously decided to be transparent and open with her faculty so they were aware of

the situation and why the next steps were being taken. Anna admitted that she has bad days, but for her it was important not to let her faculty see all of these publicly. She was conscious of the lasting effect bad moments can have on a staff and has worked to remain positive in front of her faculty.

Emily has worked to enhance the communication within her school community. As she stated, “Communication sucks here. Nobody knows what’s going on.” Emily has actively worked to improve school culture and has started to work on this through the communication among her faculty members. Emily is working on ways in which to change aspects of the school to subtly improve the communication among her faculty members. Jessica’s school has a town hall meeting for 10 minutes every Monday morning, where they run through information that is relevant to the faculty for the upcoming week. Robert sends out a weekly memo that tries to make sure his teachers know what is going on so that things within the school community are clear. Jody commented that her highest rankings on observations have been for her communication, and that all school stakeholders felt confident in her communication skills.

Another sub-theme that emerged as a deficient area was patience. Monica’s first word in response to the question was “patience.” In particular, she mentioned that she beats herself up a lot and referenced her word choice with the mindset that change does not happen quickly. Margaret mentioned that she keeps the “naysayers on your team. Keep those enemies close” as points she remembers. Rosalie mentioned that she sometimes loses patience during school and has worked to remain calm in those moments because she has realized that she cannot change it all. Timothy did not state the word patience, however he has the mentality that he wants to be the expert in his school and has had to work with the feeling that he is not.

Communication and praise emerged from the interview responses. Kyle immediately responded that “listening skills” was an area and he followed it up by saying that he is actively working on listening to people so that they are heard. Doug stressed the idea of conversations and listening in his response and mentioned that he has an open door policy to help building communication among his faculty and share information. Chris stated that,

You don’t want to make it seem as if you don’t have enough time for somebody who truly has a need or a problem and they’re looking to you to be the person to help them out and you give them the bum’s rush.

He reiterated that he has been conscious about how he says things and how his faculty perceive the information. Rich gave an example of using poker chips with teacher’s names on them to get into everyone’s classroom, and this has helped him get into a routine and focus on praising, and communicating more, with his faculty.

Robert sends out weekly memos and tries to incorporate human contact and conversations in the ways he communicates with his faculty and staff, while Rosalie mentioned that she has tried to be transparent and professional in her communication with faculty and staff. Sarah also valued communication in her work with her staff and would come in each morning and create a to-do list of people to see before the school day got underway. She found that to be an efficient and effective way to go about getting time with her staff, while also delivering messages that needed to be conveyed. Anna has worked with her faculty on how to compose positive emails to parents as well as strategies to use on the phone with families. Jason has also focused his communication on email and has encouraged his faculty to pick up the phone or meet face-to-face in order to avoid miscommunication with that particular medium.

Finally, the sub-theme of listening emerged during the coding of the communication interview question. Erik's response mentioned, "I think part of it is hearing what teachers have to say and really listening to teachers." Paul's response echoed that conversations are not one sided, and said, "If communication is shut down, that's when he's seen things not go well." Vinny admitted that communication is difficult for him, but he is working with his team to listen in order to navigate some of the difficult conversations he has with his faculty and staff. Rosalie's immediate response to the communication interview question was "I listen a lot, because I think that's super important. I want them to be able to listen a lot too."

Peggy listened to her faculty to figure out what was working and not working, and she stated that, "So I had to really again learn and listen, but it was more in-house learning and listening." Vinny mentioned that he listens to his faculty when building consensus towards the yearly theme for his school community. Jody stated that she has an open door and is willing to listen to school community members. She mentioned that it is the little things that matter, including returning a parent phone call so that they are listened to. Jessica spent time listening and learning from her faculty, and stated that, "my theory coming into this position was that I've got to live this," which included taking time to listen to what her faculty were saying.

Building Relationships. Participants worked to build relationships with their faculty and staff as a component of their transformational leadership. Adam admitted that his school is a big place, and as a result, he is not going to catch or know everything. One strategy he has implemented is asking teachers and faculty members to invite him in to their meetings and classrooms in order to get a better sense of what is going on. Jessica holds a town hall meeting with her faculty and staff every Monday morning to share what is going on for the week. These meetings last about 10 minutes; however, she believes it is an open forum to celebrate

achievements and milestones. As Jessica stated, “The motto is, if you shared it at town hall, it’s not gossip. If you share it behind closed doors, then it is.” Emily’s response was similar, but she believes that in order to have truly effective communication it comes back to the school culture. That is an element of her role that she is working on, and with that comes building a stronger, more positive channel of communication within the building.

The ability to be honest when communicating surfaced during the interview responses. Chris pointed out that he wants his faculty to keep in mind that they are “partnering with parents” as they share information with students’ families. Communicating with all stakeholders emerged during conversations about participants’ views on effective communication within their school communities. Doug did not want members of his faculty to feel as though they were not included and has used these honest responses to shape the way in which he communicates today. Monica said that she told her faculty two things during her first faculty meeting: “...I need trustworthy truth tellers around me so I don’t want any surprises.” Sarah stated that she tries to keep her communication short, targeted, and brief while Samantha utilizes her grade level teams towards getting her message out. Annie mentioned that consistent and proactive communication has been her means of making sure that all constituents have all of the necessary information. Rosalie stated that she tries to listen to her faculty in order to have a clear sense of what is going on in the building, while Henrik cited his district’s incorporation of breakthrough coach as an effective means of getting out from behind his desk more often. Anna instructs her faculty to communicate, but to set clear times and parameters so that the expectations are clear to families at home.

Working through difficult conversations and situations emerged when principals reflected on areas of leadership they are deficient in. Rory mentioned that it does not matter what field

you are in, you cannot avoid anything. In particular, as principal he has to be able to negotiate a crisis. He has also worked to delegate more effectively, and in particular finding a balance between independence for his faculty and micromanaging. Timothy spoke about difficult conversations as an area of leadership in which he is deficient. He mentioned, “Those difficult conversations, whether it be with leaders or teachers—I still find myself trying to soften the blow....” Erik began his response by stating that “I’m not always great at being succinct and direct in a situation that’s challenging,” and he has worked on this skill as an area in which he is deficient.

Erik perceived himself as good at talking nicely to people and respecting them, but found that in difficult conversations he has had to be “more clear when there’s a controversial situation that I need to deal with.” Doug had a friend and colleague that broke his trust concerning school information that was shared. Doug has worked to chip away at rebuilding the trust with his colleague, and he stated that, “He needed to massage that relationship in order to start mending it to where he wants it to be.” Nora stated that she needs to be respectful of her faculty while balancing the relationships she has with them in order to get her staff to where they need to go. Rich has used poker chips to make sure that he spreads his time out evenly among his staff in order to continue to build relationships equally with each of them.

The value of face-to-face conversations emerged from the interview responses. Jason mentioned that he has developed cooperative relationships by talking to people, sometimes informally, and has asked people to present at faculty meetings when he wanted to encourage people to grow. Monica took the time to have conversations with people through her open door policy, which she implemented after relocating her office to a more central location within the natural flow of pedestrian traffic during the school day. Phil spoke about using conversations

with his faculty to talk through issues by fostering trust and the sense that he is open and approachable, while Jessica met individually with each of her summer staff members to get to know them before the school year began. Anna has facilitated conversations among her faculty members to help find common ground, and although this has been difficult, she helped to clear staff misperceptions.

Nora and Lucas mentioned conflict in their responses, and the ideas of not ruffling feathers and difficult conversations emerged. Nora gave an example of a difficult conversation she had with a parent that caused her to become very upset. It caused her to be reflective of her role as principal, and she uses that moment as an example of her leadership skills that she is actively working on. Lucas stated that, “I think when I exhibit one of the five dysfunctions of a team, it’s fear of conflict.” Lucas is conscientious of not wanting to ruffle too many feathers at once, and this has been an area of leadership that he is working to develop.

Timothy’s interview response focused on face-to-face conversations, and he mentioned, “I didn’t do anything special other than sit down and talk. That’s how I handle most of my things.” Adam also believed in the value of conversations when developing cooperative relationships, and this occurred through listening during meetings and listening to people informally in the hallway. He has worked to explain things as much as he can to bring out the greater good for the school. Sarah held meetings with her faculty to gather feedback on what worked best during a potential change to the schedule, and by developing cooperative relationships was able to do what was in the best interest of kids.

Nora’s school has gone through several different changes, and as a result, she has had to determine different elements of communication with different school groups. She has used the faculty growth and renewal system to stay in touch with her staff and has worked to

communicate more with faculty during the hiring process. Jessica holds a town hall meeting for her entire faculty and staff every Monday morning, and this is something that she did not change upon entering the school. The entire community placed value on the communication during the meeting and Jessica felt strongly about keeping the structure in place. Emily placed a great value on communication as she has seen the benefits translate into her school culture within her building. Jody also placed a high value on communication both internally and externally and she stated that she “tr[ies] not to let any stone be unturned through different communication” and the more involved a child is in the school the more communication they will receive at home. Participants valued the ability to have face-to-face conversations with people as a way in which they communicate effectively as leaders. Anna has worked with her faculty to help each person have the ability to construct positive interactions with families online, and this has, in turn, helped her faculty with face-to-face conversations. Phil mentioned that the physical location of his assistant principals and department heads offices are within a short distance from his which has allowed his leaders in the building to become comfortable talking with him. Rosalie’s predecessor was very quiet and secretive, and her approach to communication with her faculty has been to listen during conversations in order for her staff to feel heard.

Sub-themes developed under the code of conversations and communication from the interview data. Paul and Vinny’s responses both echoed the idea of the importance of honesty when having conversations with school community members. Paul admitted he likes having conversations and talking, but he works to build on the honesty piece of conversations. Vinny’s response to the interview question mentioned that his first line of communication is attempting to confer with faculty members informally, and this is an area of his leadership skill set that he continually works to develop.

Value of Communication. The value of communication as an aspect of transformational leaders emerged from the interview responses. Jason reread his emails several times before hitting send, particularly when it comes to sending out emails to parents. The human element of communicating proactively with this group of the school community is an important element to keep in mind. Jason mentioned that, “If the parent is contentious, you’re better off having a face-to-face meeting with them or picking up the phone.” Despite the use of email as a means to save people time, Sarah said that despite the immediacy that email as a form of communication has its downfalls. She stated, “I am not trying to build relationships through email. That, to me, is not going to get me anywhere.” The human side of communicating through email, whether through saving people time or not putting information in writing was clear in the participants’ responses.

One human element that participants believe leads to their abilities to be transformational leaders is being transparent, open, and visible regarding their beliefs on communication. Robert found that personal, individual, and face-to-face communication is best. He stated that,

I think anytime you have human contact is better than not, and our world is getting so much into the devices and not to the people. There are two different things. I try to walk around, pretty much most of the day.

He places an emphasis and value on the human contact he has each day with his faculty as a cornerstone of his ability to communicate with his building. Peggy also believed in the value of face-to-face communication, in balance, throughout all elements of her school community. She enabled her faculty to handle situations while giving them the tools to be able to do so. Rosalie was categorized under the sub-theme of respect. Her response to communication was one of listening, giving people a heads up, while supporting faculty members for the decisions they

made in their classrooms. The depth of her response to the question articulated that she was aware of her personal communication style and its effect on her faculty and staff.

Interview participants were asked in what ways they worked to promote positive internal and external communication. Participants cited multiple ways they have worked to accomplish this goal, including sending out newsletters, using faculty meetings to pass along messages, and utilizing day to day conversations in the building. There were several participants whose responses highlighted a combination of different communication formats that enveloped around the theme of the human elements of leadership. These are fundamental elements of participants' self-perceptions of their transformational leadership practices.

Erik, Paul, Vinny, Rosalie, and Monica all mentioned the value they placed in the importance of communication within a school building. Rosalie mentioned that, "You're a professional. You have multiple degrees. You know what you're doing and I trust that you know what you're doing." Vinny was constantly asking how he could do things better regarding his communication, and admitted, "Sometimes I get it right; sometimes I get it wrong." Paul's response acknowledged that he valued his faculty and staff, "even if what they want is not going to go their way." He still believed in conveying the message that his teachers are valued despite the decisions that are made. Monica made it clear during her first faculty meeting the value she placed on communication and conversations by playing the game "Marco Polo." She used her faculty's hesitance towards getting involved with the game as an analogy of what can happen when positive communication is impeded. Erik also believed in the importance of communication within his school as a way to build understanding for the decisions that are made as a school principal.

The ability to engage in conversations and the ability to listen to colleagues and constituents emerged from the interview responses. Paul mentioned that, “I think the most effective way is to verbalize it to your staff and kind of discuss it and weave it into everything, every conversation that you have, some way link it back to that.” Phil was also in agreement with the value of communication and stated, “The conversations is the most important thing to start with. Then we can work on how we develop the codifying of it.” Jody stated it as such, “Having a door open; returning a phone call, returning an email because those things hadn’t been happening. So it really was the little things.”

Finding Statement 3: Theme 2: Model the Behavior

The second theme that emerged from the data analysis was modeling the behavior. The theme incorporated participant thoughts and statements in which they provided responses that demonstrated their awareness of performing actions themselves as a positive guide to faculty. The first section below highlighted participants’ responses when asked to provide a definition of transformational leadership. Within the theme, the sub-themes of praise, being visible and open, leading people, self-perceptions, and vision emerged. Each sub-theme provided a category where participants spoke about modeling behaviors themselves for different purposes in their role.

Definition of Transformational Leadership. Paul, Kyle, and Erik each identified leadership skills as core to their interpretations of the definition of transformational leadership. Kyle mentioned that his philosophy is based on servant leadership, and as a result “Instead of looking elsewhere, I’m the guy behind trying to help you so that you can fulfill your responsibility.” Erik and Paul pointed towards leadership in their responses towards defining transformational leadership, and each of their definitions mentioned the leaders’ skills as a

central component to the style of leadership under study. The sub-theme of modeling the behavior expected of faculty emerged from the interview responses. Vinny said that he “wants people to tell him when they see someone else doing a good job to be highlighted” and has worked to model this behavior with his faculty. Henrik also tries to motivate people with his behavior and said that he tries to let his faculty know that he cares and are appreciated in the ways he goes about giving feedback. He has begun putting “thank yous” at the top of his meeting agendas and has encouraged his faculty to do the same.

Lucas’ comments fell under the theme of modeling the behavior in that he mentioned during his response “You better know who you are and what you want to do” when he considers how he praises his faculty and staff. Erik has modeled the behavior of the expectations from his staff as they present at faculty meetings, and he has worked to get people involved throughout the year in discussing instructional strategies.

Praise. The sub-theme of making sure that praise was authentic emerged from the interview responses. Annie gave authentic feedback to a teacher who “didn’t even see what she was doing in the classroom was going above and beyond,” and Annie said that she authentically led the teacher into helping others implement the instructional approach. Robert also tried to be authentic when giving praise to his faculty, and he made a point in his response to say that he does attempt to make sure the praise he is giving is authentic.

Robert has praised his faculty through his own behaviors, speaking and spoke about how he wants praise to be authentic to his faculty and staff. In his interview response, he mentioned that he tries to delegate and model the behavior that he expects with his faculty and staff. Margaret has recognized people in a wide variety of ways, and students have noticed the way in which she interacts with people in her building and begun to emulate her behavior. Nora has

modeled the behavior she expects of others in the manner in which she has built credibility among her faculty through remembering what is in the best interest of kids throughout her time having difficult conversations with faculty members.

Several participants responded that they praise their faculty electronically, and the sub-theme of email, newsletter, or online post emerged. Jason stated that he sends an email, while Rich created a program where teachers nominate other teachers for the good work they are doing. Sarah mentioned several examples of ways she praises her faculty including putting bulletins in her electronic staff news and sending out emails. Anna used weekly newsletters, and email to communicate her praise to her faculty and staff, while Gary will implement a blog in order to communicate his praise with his faculty.

Kyle's interview response articulated his work with different groups of people throughout his career. He has done his best to create programs and structures that acknowledge and represent the work his faculty are undertaking in his building. Timothy acknowledged the work of his faculty when he undertook the new instructional training with his staff to be a part of the journey with them. By being visible and non-judgmental, Anna has acknowledged that her faculty see her and remember the daily interactions that she has with each of them. Gary's encouragement of his staff to attend professional development has gone a long way towards acknowledging that his teachers are experts in their fields while mentioning that there is always room to learn and grow. By holding people accountable, Annie has acknowledged that it takes more than just her to run an efficient school building and has utilized conversations with her faculty and staff in an effort to do so.

Visible and Open. Being visible emerged as a sub-theme when participants responded to the interview questions. Phil said the word "flexible" while Chris said, "I think that you need

to be a good listener and you need to be empathetic to be a good listener.” Jody mentioned that her faculty would say she is friendly, open, and willing to listen, while Lucas used the word approachable as to how his staff would describe his leadership style. Robert used the words “visible” and “accessible,” and Vinny commented that he believed his staff would say that he listens and that “No one gets surprised.” Henrik believed that he sets an example and that his faculty would say that he “try[ies] to set an example of being available to kids.”

The theme of being immersed and visible in the school community occurred with several participants’ responses to the interview question. Chris mentioned that there is a high visibility when it comes to his actions as principal, and he has remained aware of this during his daily interactions. Rory commented, “I immerse myself in everything, and maybe I don’t mean immerse. I try to be present in just about everything. How do I want to say this? I don’t go there to oversee, but I want to be involved.” Rory’s comments reiterate the concept of being involved, but not in a way that oversees his faculty and staff.

The theme of conversations emerged from the interview responses. One sub-theme from this was the aspect of being visible within the school building and community as a way to continue to challenge yourself as a leader. Annie has worked to understand the different layers within her new school district and has enjoyed trying to be visible in classrooms regarding her understanding and implementation of the new evaluation system. By using poker chips to evenly distribute his time among his faculty, Rich has worked to build conversations and dialogue with his faculty by being visible. This is an element of leadership he identified as a challenge for him in his school.

Another sub-theme that emerged was the aspect of having conversations and talking to people as a means to continuing to challenge themselves as leaders. Annie has challenged

herself in creating opportunities to speak with her staff regarding the new evaluation system in her district. Doug worked through a challenging situation with a colleague and has reflected that it is all about “trust and communication.” He has worked to reestablish communication with his colleague in response to a prior incident. Rosalie responded that she struggles to deal with the “BS” of the school and has worked to be more strategic in her choices in an effort to not get bogged down. As she stated “You can’t change it all.” Kyle mentioned that he works to have conversations with the board “to get their insight and perspective,” which was an area of the job that was uniquely mentioned by Kyle.

Paul’s interview response mentioned that he tries to be physically present at as many events, games, concerts, or performances as possible. He mentioned that by doing so, his actions go a long way with both his faculty, staff, and parent bodies. Paul also affirmed this finding when he stated,

I’ve found over the years that regardless of your style, that’s something that people that you lead want. They want to see their leader present. They want to see them in the hall. They want to see them at games and concerts. I think that’s kind of an unspoken modeling. You don’t have to say much, but being present kind of shows that you’re invested. I think that goes a long way.

Participants felt the need to be involved, or immersed, in their buildings as a way of demonstrating to their faculty that they are invested and present. This element was coded as a human aspect of principals’ transformational leadership self-perceptions, as it directly ties to the interactions between participants and the people they lead in their buildings.

The idea of being open-minded and approachable emerged from the data analysis. Jason’s first word when asked the interview question was “open-minded,” while Anna said

“available.” Emily said her faculty would describe her as an “open book,” and Jessica mentioned that her faculty would say she is open-minded with an open door policy. In a similar comment, Annie also stated that her faculty would describe her as having an “open door” and “easy to approach,” and Vinny said his faculty might state that, “no one gets surprised.”

Several participants also spoke about how they have used praise as a means of motivation with their faculty and staff. Lucas uses praise as a means of motivation for himself, and stated in this response, “You better know who you are and what you want to do.” Margaret has used praise to motivate her faculty, and she has posted pictures of what is going on different bulletin boards throughout the school to highlight what various faculty members have accomplished. Robert makes sure that he finds faculty members throughout the day to acknowledge the outstanding work they do, but he does this through a one on one setting or via email. Adam has encouraged his faculty members to get into the community to present professionally, while Emily has actively found opportunities as praise for her faculty to continue to learn and grow. Chris speaks to his faculty directly after doing informal walkthroughs and uses an app to acknowledge his staff and motivate them.

Vinny has worked to have his faculty express to him when they see someone doing something good to further motivate his staff to improve. Henrik has worked to make sure his praise is specific and targeted, and as a result, it has motivated his staff to use it during their own interactions with colleagues. Rory has hoped that a few people would influence the greater good regarding how they praise members of the school community. Erik mentioned that he thinks his faculty are motivated by the fact that he is not the only person to run faculty meetings, and that other members of the school are involved and active in school growth. Nora has learned how to

work through difficult conversations from her supervisor towards continuing to motivate her faculty and staff.

Leading People. Gary, Paul, and Kyle each defined transformational leadership as incorporating the idea of leading people and providing them with support. Paul focused on using his skills as a leader to help transform the stakeholders in the building towards achieving their best. Gary mentioned that the end result of transformational leadership should be leading constituents for a better school community. Kyle's response when asked to define the question involved the idea of helping people in order to support them to complete their best work.

The sub-theme of modeling the behavior expected of the faculty and students in the building emerged through the interview responses. Several of the department heads with whom Adam worked initially resisted the change he proposed in the schedule. He modeled the approach, "He can't take a lot personally. You're always making decisions based on what's right for kids." Vinny has modeled being part of a team while providing options and gaining consensus among his faculty while listening to other people's perspectives. He has worked to find middle ground with this faculty in order to have conversations and dialogues between different perspectives. Emily has modeled the behavior she expects from her faculty and the "the key piece and I think in modeling the conversation then in front of the teacher is this is how I expect you to talk to kids." Chris has modeled the expectations he expects from his faculty when he models how teachers should collaborate, and not be isolated in silos. He has encouraged his faculty to collaborate continually.

Several participants mentioned their colleagues, or people, in their response to how they continue to challenge themselves as leaders. Adam immediately thought of the students, and how he balances paperwork with other responsibilities. He has found it rewarding to work with

kids on how to navigate social media. It has been important for him to be “in their world” and this has helped him stay current. Margaret stated that she is “doing whatever the teachers doing,” and that she feels like she has a good pulse on everything in her school. Lucas’ response to the interview question focused on elements of change, and he has worked to get back into the literature about it as a result. He mentioned, “It’s always take it from where people are.” Peggy also thought of people in her response, and her reaction of continuing to stay current included serving on her town’s Board of Education to have dialogue with other professionals regarding education initiatives.

Nora spoke about a summer program that she takes part in that has been a significant “engine of growth” for her. As she described it, “I feel like I have this group totally outside of my job but that intimately knows the gist of my job, that I go to all the time for even simple things.” Samantha spoke about the challenge of getting her staff to work collaboratively and mentioned her colleagues as an area that she is working to foster and develop. Sarah listens to podcasts of her professional colleagues to continue to learn new things and found the challenges and conversations with her colleagues in her new role as a learning opportunity as well. Chris earned his doctorate several years ago, and as a result has found that he is taken seriously when asked to speak publicly. It has also put him into groups with new colleagues who continue to challenge him to learn and grow in his role.

Phil also mentioned that he has worked to be clearer with his communication to his faculty, both in acknowledgment and with student concerns and issues. As he stated, “that’s still a work in progress.” Timothy’s interview response was also coded as “bogged down,” as he mentioned initially that he “feels like he’s playing catch-up.” He also stated that the day-to-day things bog him down and make it difficult to balance his responsibilities. Sarah also spoke about

making sure she had a balance in her role, particularly when she first took the job on. She felt bogged down and overwhelmed by the many aspects of the job that at first were overwhelming.

Participants' responses to the interview question reflected the theme of doing what is best for kids within their role as principal. Rosalie spoke about using old thank you cards that she has received from students as something that she keeps coming back to, and it reminds her that her role is about students and their learning. Annie mentioned that she has told her faculty when they are searching for motivation that you "Fake it till you make it. You can talk yourself into that," while Erik spoke about taking actions with his teachers so that they see how he interacts with them to work towards improvement. Adam's response to the interview question was "Never give up on a kid."

Timothy's response centered around caring, and by doing so advocating for what is best for kids. As he said, "You have to care about kids. If you don't care about kids, then why are we here?" Paul spoke about his faculty not always liking his mantra, but he "mentioned going back to having conversations with teachers about what's in the best interest of students helping to put things in perspective." Peggy immediately responded by stating, "It's always going to be about the children," and Sarah also stated right away, "Yes, the kids."

Emily reflected that for her, she thinks about how students will look back on their experience in 10 years and uses that lens in how she goes about her day. Vinny used the lens of change and the mantra of being heard as the focus of his daily motivation. In her interview response, Anna speaks to kids about a higher being and purpose, and says to her students, "there is a place in heaven for you." Students who model the behaviors he is attempting to instill in them motivated Kyle, and this mentality and mantra guides his daily work.

Kyle's interview response question also mentioned the fact that he is a continuing learner, and he tries to model those behaviors for his students. He has recognized the value of modeling appropriate behavior and actions with his school community, and he is starting to see the behavior of his students change. Rosalie goes back to the stash of thank you notes she has in a drawer to remind her of why she does what she does. Jason reminds himself, "At the end of the day, as a profession, we are doing good for people." He also reflected that the little things could make a major effect. Doug also stated that he is reflective and continues to learn in his role as principal. He referred to this as he also mentioned the incorporation of quotes in his newsletters to the school community, and how parents, faculty, and students have positively received them.

Jessica's response demonstrated her ability to reflect on herself as a learner and at the end of her interview response stated, "We are doing this together," because she recognized that a school is more than just her role as the principal. The one thing that Margaret keeps in mind is, "you might not like that person, but you want to befriend them because that helps move change along." Vinny mentioned his ability to allow people to be heard in his building and mentioned this in line with the idea that people do not like change. He has remained aware of this in his role and mentioned that in response to the interview question. Sarah was reflective in her interview response question and mentioned that she remains focused on the kids. She also reminds herself, "don't get lost in the vacuum," in her role as principal.

Jessica and Margaret both believed that they modeled the behavior in order to empower their faculty to take risks, and Margaret highlighted a moment when she brought in experts to inform her faculty regarding the Hudson River Unit in order to simulate the behavior and expectations she expects from her staff. Jessica has shared numerous resources, including apps and research, with her staff to model the behavior she would like to see from her building.

Vinny described his modeling behavior as “coaching oriented” and has worked to help his faculty make interdisciplinary connections in their work while feeling empowered to take instructional risks. Adam mentioned “role modeling” particularly during faculty meetings as an opportunity to show his staff the behaviors and expectations he has in his building. Rich also mentioned that he works to model behaviors in order for his faculty to feel empowered to take risks, particularly when dealing with interactions between faculty and students. In addition, he mentioned the theme of working like a coach with the staff in his building.

The elements of listening and learning emerged from several participants, including Robert, Adam, Vinny, and Doug. In their response to the interview question, they highlighted the ability to listen to different school stakeholders and the wherewithal to learn in their roles as a result. Robert stated that conversations are critical to his ability to enable his faculty to take risks, and in doing so listen, learned, and created mutual respect between himself and his faculty. In his response to the interview question, Adam mentioned that he has listened and learned from his mistakes and has acknowledged these moments with his faculty. In doing so, he believes he has developed relationships in order for his staff to take risks in the classroom. Vinny stated that he is “open to hearing and receiving feedback because it’s coach oriented. We can all improve.” Doug stated that he thinks that his staff knows that he has their back, and also mentioned the conversations he has had with his faculty as means to enabling his building to take instructional risks.

Vinny makes it a point that his name appears on the substitute rotation list. Even if his name does not make it off the list, Vinny commented that the act of having his name on the list is one way in which he makes himself visible to his faculty and staff. Anna walks the halls of her school and is visible during drop off and pick up for her student and parents.

Rosalie attempts to get into classrooms as often as possible, and she has noticed that being active and visible to her faculty has helped build her credibility in her school. Emily has made herself available and visible to her faculty and works to practice different conversations with her staff. Monica reiterated Paul's statement of making sure that she attends as many events within her school community as possible. This allows her to model the expectations and behaviors of her staff.

Vinny's response to the interview question was clear. He stated,

We make that explicit. You can experiment, and you can mess up. That's fine; that's great actually. Both at the micro level in your classroom and at the macro level of like let's try this scheduled (laughter) and if it's a disaster it's okay because we're willing to try it.

Jody said that encouraging her faculty to take risks takes "baby steps" along the way. Gary spoke about how he reacts when his faculty attempt different things in the classroom and said that he says to his staff "Give it a chance and explore it. I'm not going to hold you...I might be angry if you don't do it, but I certainly won't be angry if you try, and it doesn't work." Taking risks is one of the first things that Anna states to her faculty and speaks about how it is an element that is necessary in being an effective educator. When Rosalie became school principal, she said it took two years of trust building before her faculty believed her when she said, "Let's try this," to them.

Rory has worked to develop a try it attitude with his faculty and mentioned that it is the attitude of the "proverbial rolling up your sleeves and letting people see that 'Hey, I really believe in this.'" Annie has utilized flexibility in choice with her teachers as a way to allow them an opportunity to take a risk while attempting to implement different instructional

approaches. Erik tries to have his faculty get comfortable with new initiatives, and he took on teaching a course himself in order to model the “try it attitude” he expects from his faculty. Adam mentioned that time plays a role in his ability to “push faculty from behind through the teacher leaders in his building” and mentioned he believes that there is a combination between the brain and the heart at play. Jessica wants her staff to avoid educational “flavors of the month” and to pick one element to try and stick with it. She encourages her faculty to try one thing and to stick with it to see if it works rather than attempting to experiment with multiple instructional elements.

Respect for faculty emerged in the findings as another intangible aspect which principals perceived as being important to them. One way in which principals went about this was through active and effective communication. Participants believed that conversations and dialogue among their faculty were the first avenues towards building trust and respect. Several principals mentioned that when they began their roles, they started by having meetings with as many members of the school community as possible. Peggy utilized this strategy:

[I] built a lot of trust and the fact that I’ve had so many years of teaching in the classroom it gave me a little bit of street cred if you will because I had walked the walk that they’re walking.

The experience she had as a classroom teacher allowed the conversations with faculty to begin gaining her trust and respect from the onset of her time as principal.

Vision. Participants placed value in their ability to communicate their vision, and the importance of a vision, within their school communities. Samantha also mentioned the value communication has on her ability to articulate her vision with the school community. As she stated, “What I did is put systems in place for us to be always talking about and thinking about

how we can problem solve for our kids.” Gary met with different school groups, including his department heads, in order to make sure their voices were heard. Robert was able to see different situations in his school through the eyes of a teacher, and this has allowed him to handle situations in a positive way while keeping a collaborative vision at the back of his mind.

Gary has modeled the behavior he expects from his faculty by working to build a brotherhood within his school community. He wants to change the culture of isolation teachers sometimes feel in their classrooms in order to create a more inclusive school community. Annie commented that her healthy sense of humor and her policy of her door always being open has modeled the behavior she expects from her faculty, while Jason has modeled the behavior on a more informal basis. He has learned who his informal leaders are and has encouraged people to attend workshops and conferences. Jody has massaged her relationships in the school and modeled behavior by having lunch with teachers and students and publicly acknowledging different members of the school community. Rosalie has modeled the collaborative team she expects from her faculty, including creating professional development opportunities for her faculty and staff to work together to build collaborative relationships. Anna has modeled behavior by giving her staff a heads up on different school elements and has mediated disputes and disagreements between colleagues. Rich has modeled behavior through his daily interactions with his school community, while Henrik has asked his faculty how far he can push them. Margaret has modeled the behavior she expects when she meets with her teams every month to listen to their concerns and encourage continual growth.

Within the theme of the bigger picture, school culture emerged as a sub-theme from the interview question responses. Rich mentioned his vision affecting school culture in his interview response, and it was one of the first elements his vision encompassed. Henrik also mentioned

that the school culture played a role in how the vision is balanced in the school community. He stated, “Everything he does at the school now is done through that lens.” Chris responded to the interview question by mentioning his school’s mission statement, and that “You can feel the climate of a school as soon as you walk into the door.” He finds that the mission and vision are reflected in the school culture of the building. Annie mentioned that she does not believe in walking into the building being able to have a vision on day one. As she said, “we will build the vision together.”

Robert also mentioned the idea of listening and learning in how he responded to the interview question, and he approached different situations with teachers from their perspective. He was able to listen to his faculty’s concerns in order to move his vision forward. Anna spoke about communication in response to the interview question, and she mentioned that she is present for her faculty and that this has allowed her to be able to listen to them regarding the vision for the school. Rosalie has worked as a colleague to her faculty prior to taking on her role as principal and has listened throughout her time in the school to her faculty, now with her vision in mind.

Vinny was another participant who mentioned respect in the ways he articulates his vision with his faculty and school community. He mentioned that they have worked to redo the schedule, and this took consensus building and trust among his staff to collaborate and deliberate over different options. Jody also worked to develop trust in order to articulate her vision, and she mentioned, “The little things mean a lot to people.” Nora gained the respect and trust of her staff as she worked through the change process when implementing a new service learning experience across an entire grade level. This came from the respect and trust that developed between herself and her supervisor, and in turn, she was able to apply this to her own faculty.

Jessica spoke about the element of trust in how she works with her faculty in her role to respect what came before her while keeping the best interests of the school at the front of her mind.

Jessica's career journey allowed her to work with a variety of different administrators who each had a vision of what they wanted the school to be. When she approached her current role as principal, she began by embracing the theory that she needed to live her new environment before developing a common vision. Jessica told the following story that highlighted the philosophy she embraced:

I have a former principal that used to say it's almost like walking into a dance and you're watching that dance. You just don't stop the music in the middle of the dance. You just don't stop the music in the middle of the dance. You watch people. In leadership and when you're a school principal, just like in that dance, if you need to refill the bowl of drinks you refill it. No, you don't need to start all over again. You fix what can be fixed but you keep that mission going.

Doug spoke of respect through the example he provided of working through a game with his faculty in order to understand what their vision was for the school. Rosalie spoke about the relationships she has developed with her colleagues and through the respect in the building; an environment has been created where authentic learning takes place. Gary has shown respect to his faculty by meetings with them in different groups, particularly department heads, in order to make sure they are listened to. Erik said in response to the interview question, "I'm setting the philosophy and vision of what I want to occur" in his building, and this includes respecting and empowering his faculty towards the same shared vision.

The idea of modeling the behavior that embodies the vision emerged from the responses of the interview participants. Samantha notes, "My presence and the way that I interact with

people and develop relationships with people immediately caused a shift in the culture of the building.” By modeling the way in which she expects people to interact with one another helped cause an immediate shift in her school. Robert falls back on his experience as a teacher to help him focus what the vision for his school will be, and he commented that, “the fact that I’ve been a teacher, and I know what it’s like.” Peggy built credibility among her faculty by speaking to each member of her staff, and once they were able to understand her experience as a classroom teacher, she was able to gain a little bit of “street cred.” Erik stated that “I walk their walk with them,” and keeps this in the back of his mind when formulating and articulating his vision for his building. Nora also modeled the behavior of her vision and developed conversations with her staff to build on shared ideas.

Monica mentioned that “my vision was to be an anthropologist and really just to understand the community.” Nora has collaborated with her faculty to determine what the needs of her students are, and as a result created a weeklong service-learning program, which has now become a regular event in the school community. Anna also used collaboration to articulate the vision, and she mentioned that beyond conversations she has an “open door” for faculty to express their thoughts and ideas. Rory stated in his interview response, “I really am a collaborative leader in a sense where people need to have input into the whole school.” He mentioned examples of how he has worked to involve his staff in the overall process when aligning his vision and mission and he reiterated this in his interview response. Rosalie has worked as a colleague in her building prior to becoming principal, and because of this has had a collaborative relationship with her faculty. She cited this as an aspect of her school that has helped move her vision along.

Paul mentioned that he verbalizes his vision constantly and modeled that behavior with this faculty so that the message is communicated as frequently as possible. Jody mentioned that “it’s baby steps and it’s role modeling. It’s leading by example and not asking you to do anything I’m not willing to do either.” Anna worked hard during the summer months to make sure her faculty were supported, and she stated, “The only thing I could do in the beginning was to be present for them.” She intentionally modeled the behavior in order to ensure that the articulation of the vision was clear.

Being Visible and Open. Participants’ placed value in their ability to be visible and open as elements of transformational leadership. Rory also spoke about how he has attempted to not micromanage his faculty, but wants them “to be collaborative and communicative” but starts by praising a few people in order to influence, as he stated, the “greater good.” Chris has made himself visible during the school day, and he uses that opportunity to praise his faculty and staff. Adam mentioned that he is visible in the hallways, in the front of the building, and that “kids and adults appreciate his visibility because he can get a lot of things done with the informal conversations. They know you put in the time and the hours.” Paul mentioned in his interview response that he has used conversations to develop cooperative relationships and mentioned, “I think the way I get people to collaborate is through, like I said, the test of time, being out there, being visible, listening to people.” Margaret has given feedback and held different conversations with members of her leadership team in order to “listen to their concerns and hears things that she might not be aware of.”

Emily has made herself visible and accessible to her faculty and mentioned that modeling conversations with her students and faculty have helped develop cooperative relationships in the building. Henrik communicates with his faculty on a regular basis and is visible to support them

in making decisions and communicating information. Erik has made himself visible to his faculty in order to help them explore the inquiry approach he is implementing in his school. He has worked to schedule PLC time and has been responsible for planning the after school meeting time effectively. Phil has encouraged his faculty to bring things to him and that they will collaborate as to the best way to figure things out. Gary has worked to bring his faculty out of their individual classrooms to create a culture of collaboration, and he visibly tried to draw each of them out.

Self-Perceptions. The self-perceptions of interview participants emerged from the interview responses. Through his daily morning meetings, Lucas was able to take his leadership team's temperature and connect with others in the building to listen at the start of each day. Jessica spent time having informal conversations over the summer with her faculty in order to listen to them and spent the first year of her role as principal "listening to them, learning, respecting their culture, listening, learning, and leading." Adam listened and was visible in the hallways to develop relationships with faculty and students, and he mentioned,

I'm in the halls every period. I'm in the front of the building when they arrive and then I'm in the front of the building when they leave. Kids know minimally they're going to see you three or four times a day.

Jody has used conversations to listen to her faculty, and mentioned, "It's letting people in on each other's personal lives to a degree. Not keeping the wall so tight"

The sub-theme of collaboration, inspiration, and support emerged as participants spoke about how their faculty would describe their leadership style. Peggy stated that she has a very collaborative and collegial relationship with her faculty, and Rory and Timothy also used the word collaborative in their description of their team's thoughts about their own leadership styles.

Adam mentioned that his staff would say that they are “in it together” and that he is collaborative in nature.

Vinny spoke about how he recently stepped in to teach a class, and this act built trust among his faculty. As he said, “...anything I’m asking a teacher to do I’m asking myself to do also.” Similarly, Jody has modeled the behavior she expects from her faculty through the conversations she has with students and the work she does integrating technology into different facets of the school building. Rich and Phil’s interview responses also mentioned how they have worked to model the communication and conversations they expect from members of their staff. Kyle has worked to model timely responses to email with his faculty, which he identified as an area of deficiency for his staff. In Rosalie’s interview response, she also mentioned her ability to model the use of technology and communication that she expects from her staff. Emily mentioned that her ability to model conversations with her faculty has allowed her to build trust and communication among her teachers.

Another theme that emerged from the interview question was that participants model the behaviors, interactions, and conversations that they expect from their faculty and staff. Both Jason and Margaret initially mentioned that they each have taken on roles in their buildings when needed to model behaviors they expect from their faculty. Peggy mentioned that with her background as a classroom teacher, she has earned “street cred” with her faculty as she models the behavior expected from her faculty. Paul’s response centered around his ability to “be himself” when modeling behaviors such as being visible and he commented, “I think everything I do has to model the behavior I want.” Monica also felt that it was important for her to be as visible as possible at as many events and activities as she can attend.

Four participants responded to the interview question by mentioning that they continue to learn by going back to school. Paul mentioned immediately that “going back to school and modeling that behavior for his faculty.” Henrik quickly mentioned his doctorate degree as one way in which he continued to learn and said that he wants to go back for an additional degree in Spanish as well. Jessica mentioned that she is taking courses and has spoken about some of her coursework during faculty meetings. Gary mentioned that he is planning on going back to school, and then highlighted areas such as school law, accounting, and business as areas that he anticipates taking courses in down the road.

Paul mentioned that he has modeled going back to school as how he continues to learn and mentioned that if he wants his faculty to stay current, he has to as well. Jessica’s coursework has allowed her to stay current in different educational topics and opportunities. Gary reflected that he has worked to be comfortable with being out of the school in order for his staff to be comfortable using days for professional development as well. He stated that, “If your principalship is able to maintain itself without your direct overview, then you can get away, and you don’t have to worry about things.”

Emily, Sarah, and Adam mentioned having a balance as ways in which they stay current in their roles as principals. Sarah stated, “making sure that I have balance. That’s why a lot of what I talked about with the staff was just balance, because being imbalanced is not healthy.” Adam mentioned how he has worked to not be stuck behind a desk and has done casual walkthroughs as much as possible so that he does not get bogged down by the paperwork. Emily needs a balance in her ability to go out and “[do] the fun and stupid things.” She is not a person who can be stimulated all day from sitting and reading a book and has worked to find an overall balance.

Learning new things emerged as an area of leadership that participants felt that they were deficient in in their roles as school principals. Robert put this within the lens of curriculum development in order to get his faculty from where they are to where they need to go. Gary had to work to transition from his role as dean in the school to principal, which forced him to learn a new leadership skill set. Emily has had to learn about dealing with conflict and found that although she knows curriculum well she was challenged to learn more about the AP curriculum outlines in her school because of her role as principal. Monica admitted to having a deficiency when it came to the investment committee and has worked to also be more compassionate in her daily interactions with colleagues. Peggy answered the interview question by stating, “I’m definitely a learner.”

The sub-theme emerged of conflict and not personalizing the job, as it can be stressful and challenging for school principals. Erik had to terminate six employees last year, and he mentioned that the energy and emotion surrounding those conversations made it hard not to internalize his role. Doug began his response by saying, “Taking a situation at face value and not holding onto it forever. Letting it go.” Timothy has struggled with the feeling that he needs to be the expert on everything and grappling with how to let that feeling go. He has also worked to have more poignant conversations with his faculty when dealing with conflict. Rory mentioned, “I also have certain weaknesses. One of mine that I’ve been working on is delegating and not expecting – not everybody is like me.” Rory also stated that you cannot avoid anything in the role. Paul stated that things become emotional when principals take things personally, and he stated several times in his interview response that, “I think the biggest trait that I work on is not personalizing the job.”

Several participants highlighted family members or friends as a source of motivation on a difficult day. Annie immediately mentioned her dad being the inspiration of her life, while Henrik named his superintendent as someone that he “can look up to.” Rich mentioned a mentor of his from several years ago who was influential, while Paul spoke about his dad and the advice he gave Paul as he was dying of cancer several years ago.

Several participants cited famous people as their focus or motivation. Margaret mentioned the author Michael Fullan as someone whose work remains a constant for her. Anna spoke about Christ and Rod Stewart as two public figures who remain a motivation for her. Henrik spoke about the “Derek Jeters” of the world as an inspiration to him as a person, while Annie mentioned people such as Abraham Lincoln and William Glasser. John Wooden was an inspiration for Rory, and he also spoke briefly about the coaches who made a positive effect on him as a young athlete.

Several participants mentioned a self-reflective theme in their response to the interview question. Sarah stated that she says, “Don’t get lost in the vacuum” amid the job responsibilities while Jason reflected on the effect the profession has while reminding himself that the little things sometimes make the biggest difference. Many of the statements which Adam made when responding to the interview question were reflective, both of himself as a leader and of the role he plays with students in his building. Jessica’s final statement when answering the interview question was “We are doing this together.”

Self-Reflection. Participants mentioned in their responses that self-reflection as leaders was another way in which they continued to stay motivated and inspired in their roles. Sarah stated that, “We are not bad people. We all make mistakes. We can fix it and move forward.” Jason reflected on his work by saying, “At the end of the day, as a profession, we are doing good

for people. We are impacting lives. The littlest things can add up to have a major impact.”

Adam tried to keep in mind that “They’re works in progress for life. That’s really what I think you try to tell the faculty and staff. That’s somebody’s prized possession.” Jessica recalled that she tried to keep in mind the phrase “We are all in this together,” while Vinny’s response reflected the idea that people do not like change. He has worked to involve people in change as one of the mantras he kept in the back of his mind. Kyle was inspired when he saw the behaviors and expectations he modeled for his students mirrored in their behaviors and actions. Rosalie relied on a stash of thank you notes sent to her over the years as inspiration, while Doug ended his thought by stating that, “Little things you think aren’t making an impact. And they do.”

In response to the interview question asking, what areas are you deficient in or are working on, the human elements of the job were areas that participants most wanted to actively work, responses included delegating responsibilities and working towards not personalizing the job. Several participants mentioned that they try to stay current by attending workshops and joining different professional organizations. Jason mentioned staying current by getting involved with various administrator groups, while Rory has recently begun utilizing the resources provided through the IB program, which his school runs. Similarly, Robert meets with a group of principals from New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut every six weeks to discuss regional topics. Jody’s school district has a relationship with the dioceses, and she has used that outlet as an avenue to continue to learn. Anna mentioned that she enjoys going to conferences in order to have a larger comparison regarding how her school compares to others. Erik stated that he wrote an article for an educational publication regarding experiential learning in schools, and Monica joined an accreditation committee to continue challenging herself in her role as principal.

Several participants were coded under the category “Learner Myself” as their responses to the interview question spoke of continuous improvement. Jason stated that he has joked about writing a book and that he shares and presents the work he is doing within his school at superintendent’s conference day at the start of school. Sarah reflected that she has learned that “It’s okay to say I don’t know. Let me get back to you,” during her time as principal. When answering the interview question, Doug immediately said, “decide to be decisive and kind or you’re going to be decisive and turn people off,” while Erik reflected that “I do the things that they (teachers) have to do too.” Both participants reflected the interview question to themselves as they contemplated their responses.

Adam was a participant who reflected on himself as a learner, and on his times as a school leader in response to the interview questions. He told a story about a plaque on his desk which was given to him by his former mentor. In turn, Adam has since given the same plaque to each assistant principal who moves on to become principal. Jessica articulated her reflection when she stated, “I am a teacher but at the end of the day I am a teacher of adults at this point.” Vinny also reflected in his response and he stated he always remembers “Don’t do change to someone, involve them in the change.” Kyle reflected on his role, particularly during challenging moments, and worked to remain focused on the students in his building.

Several different elements were discussed when participants responded to the question of how they continue to challenge themselves as leaders. Several mentioned the day to day as a challenge they face, since they are still putting out fires and managing these elements of their leadership. Participants highlighted having a self-awareness of who they are as leaders before attempting to implement change within their buildings.

As an aspect of the leadership process, participants were asked how they continue to challenge themselves as leaders during the interview phase. Throughout the responses to this question, the human elements of leadership emerged from their responses as well. One category that emerged was the idea of learning new things either in or out of the building. Nora mentioned that she tries to do things that she is afraid to do, or that are new to her that she has never done before. One example she provided was that she offered to teach a class within her department, but left it up to the department head to place her where there was a need. The need of the department was outside of her familiarity and comfort zone, but by agreeing to teach the course, she was able to step outside of this for the betterment of her building. Nora also mentioned that because of this she has had to learn how to use many of the tech initiatives that she is asking her faculty to incorporate into their instructional lessons. As she stated,

It's sort of become a little bit of a point of pride for me, which is all those tech initiatives that I'm asking teachers to do, I've got to figure out how to use the iPad in a meaningful way, too.

Participants utilized different professional opportunities to continue building their professional fields. Conferences and workshops were two of the outlets participants mentioned as a source of professional learning for them. Anna, Jason, Robert, and Jody each spoke about conferences and workshops they have attended as avenues that allow them to continue to challenge themselves as leaders. Jason and Robert highlighted being a member of several different organizations within the region that they use to stay current. Jody was a participant from a private school and mentioned that she utilizes similar training within that network to stay on top of her game. Anna also mentioned attending conferences initially as a way in which she puts herself out there to learn about new educational knowledge to bring back to her school.

Participants also pointed to other people, whether it was family members, colleagues, or more famous names as motivation and inspiration for the work they do with kids in schools. Rory spoke about the role that athletics played in his life towards teaching him basic principles and how to handle tough situations through the interactions and experiences he had playing sports. Annie spoke about her dad and mentioned that when she reflects on her role as a principal now she can see a lot of her dad's behaviors and influence in the mirror. Paul told a story of the words and advice his dad gave him while dying of cancer several years ago. His father said to him, "Just make sure you do what's right for your kids, your students. If you make decisions that are always predicated on what's best for your students, then you can go home and sleep at night." These words continue to serve as inspiration and motivation for Paul as he continues his role as building principal. Along similar lines, Rich spoke about a colleague and mentor of his that also passed away from cancer as his motivation and inspiration. His friend forced him to keep life in perspective during challenging moments on the football field. Due to his mentor's influence, Rich said that, "The first thing I do each morning is to be thankful I'm alive to enjoy the day. Then I enjoy it with everyone I encounter. It's what I want this school to be like." Participants' focus and emphasis on people reinforced the theme that emerged. Beyond any quote, book, or song lyric the effect and influence of other people on principal participants was strong and reinforced finding that transformational leadership encompasses a strong human element as a central component.

As Sarah began implementing different changes within her school, she found that modeling the behaviors to her faculty when her attempts failed proved to be extremely valuable. Jessica was another participant who leads by example and mentioned that she asks her faculty to provide weekly highlights of how their weeks went each week. In preparation for this, Jessica

sends out an email every Friday morning talking about the highlights of her week and how things went. As Jessica says, “Right then and there, I believe I’m modeling what I want them to do.” Participants believed that this element of transformational leadership was an important intangible element that added to their abilities to be effective school leaders.

Kyle’s leadership style revolves around servant leadership, so he responded to the interview question by engaging in different professional development opportunities and encourages his staff to do the same. Rich mentioned conversations with this faculty as being one way in which he challenges people to embrace risks and change, while Lucas’ response to the interview question mentioned his ability to build “inter-relational trust” among his faculty in order to empower them to take risks in the classroom. Vinny mentioned that he is open and responsive to feedback, and that he asks his faculty to provide this in order for everyone to improve.

Peggy used her ability to relate to her staff to acknowledge their effort, and she credits this with their recognition of her time as a classroom teacher prior to becoming an administrator. Paul’s response was self-reflective as he responded to the interview question, and he felt that it was important for him to be brutally honest with his staff and with himself. Henrik was self-reflective in his interview response and stated that he has acknowledged that people appreciate humility and has worked towards admitting to his teachers when things do not go well as an acknowledgment of this behavior. In a similar response, Rich mentioned that it is the little things that let people know he cares for them, and it is particularly the gestures that do not wear off (like buying bagels once) that have made the most effect.

Sarah was coded under the sub-theme of “organized and focused” because her faculty would describe her as being focused and organized. She stated that she is organized, and that her faculty would describe her as an “organization machine.”

Participants were asked how they “walked the walk” in their daily routines and actions in order to build credibility among their faculty. Despite being difficult to measure, this intangible leadership element is an important aspect of participants’ self-perceptions of their individual transformational leadership practices. The code used for this was the human element, and this was built from the themes that developed from the interview question. The themes that emerged were willingness to do the job, balance, modeled behaviors, accountability, acknowledgement, building relationships, immersion, delegation and transparency. The themes emerged from the responses to the interview question from each participant in Phase 2.

A second theme that emerged from the interview question was the idea of balance when modeling the behavior expected from faculty. Several participants spoke about maintaining a balance when it comes to working with the different elements that their jobs entail. Phil mentioned that he is accommodating to teachers’ needs until it becomes a problem. Finding the balance between being empathetic with his professional responsibilities is an area that he believed he has worked to build in his role. Additionally, Phil mentioned balancing people during difficult conversations. In his response, he said,

I do find those conversations to be difficult, but also, again, with the experience over the years, I have come to realize that, as much as I want to be friends with everybody, it is still a relationship that is not a friendship thing when it comes to our work responsibilities.

Margaret commented on being aware of her faculty and allowing them to maintain a balance between their responsibilities and commitments. She referenced being mindful in how she presents and executes different opportunities with them, particularly when it refers to newer teachers presenting in front of veteran employees. Monica reiterated the need for balance, and as a private school participant was aware of the different aspects of school life her faculty can simultaneously undertake. Henrik mentioned a balance in his response also, and this was specifically in reference to ensuring that his faculty maintains a strong work life balance.

Three participants mentioned the idea of delegating responsibilities and gaining different perspectives as ways in which they model the behaviors they expect from their faculty. Chris mentioned, “I think as a building leader, you cannot discriminate as to what you will or will not do for the betterment of your school.” Lucas gained feedback from his supervisor on how he was running faculty meetings, and as a result began to bring other people in to enhance the quality and output of future meetings. Jody mentioned that she utilized one of her technology directors in order to gain perspective on the troubles the faculty had rolling out new technology and to delegate the new responsibility to an expert in the field.

Participants perceived themselves as being humble and mindful of their faculty in their descriptions of their transformational leadership traits. It was acknowledged that teachers have a lot on their plates, and participants were mindful of this as an intangible piece that they needed to be cognizant of. Rory commented that, “It’s about mindfulness, that we all come from different experiences in life, that we have to be conscious, that we don’t all have the same definition or expectations.” Margaret finds herself being mindful of what she asks of her new teachers to do in front of the veterans, because despite their willingness to participate, it can be an uncomfortable position for the new teachers to be in. Being a private school educator, Monica

also was mindful of understanding the balance she expects from her faculty. She mentioned that not only do private school leaders need to embrace the lifestyle of the school; she has needs to be mindful of the balance in her faculty's lives as the year unfolds. Another form of humility in which principals "walk the walk" is admitting their mistakes when something goes wrong. Henrik made note of this when he said, "People really appreciate humility. They appreciate if you're willing to say 'Hey, you know what? I blew that one and here's how I blew it. I'll try to get it right the next time.' None of us are perfect." By holding themselves personally accountable, principals perceive that their faculty appreciate this and in turn bolsters their transformational leadership traits.

A recurring idea that emerged from the interview responses was the willingness of participants to do the job themselves or referencing that they had already done the job. Jason mentioned teaching a class when it needed to be filled. Margaret was clear in her response when she said, "I'll do any job in this building. I take on any role whenever it's needed. I let the teachers know I'm not asking you to do something that I wouldn't do." Monica mentioned attending different events and the idea of showing up as her willingness to do any and all tasks. She stated, "You've got to be all in, and if I'm not walking that walk. I go to every theater event if I'm not travelling. I visit classes. I try to show up." Chris' response to the question reflected his acknowledgment of his ability to do the job when he mentioned, "I think as a building leader, you cannot discriminate as to what you will or will not do for the betterment of your school, the service to your students and parents and your faculty." Henrik also commented, "There's not something that I would ask somebody to do in this place that I haven't done myself or wouldn't do myself really." Vinny was another participant whose initial comments to the interview question mirrored Chris' and Henrik's. He stated that he has taught courses in order to

demonstrate to his faculty that there is nothing he expects of them that he would not take on himself.

Several other participants also commented on their willingness to “do the job” if need be. Annie commented that one way she “walks the walk” is by staying calm during difficult situations that emerge during the school day. Emily mentioned that she tries to make sure that teachers have the resources they need, such as having enough chairs or paper in a classroom in order to do their jobs. Gary mentioned that he encourages his faculty to go out to conferences and workshops to enhance his staff’s professional development, and in the process acknowledged that he needs to get back to participating in more opportunities as well. Jody works to lay the groundwork of elements of her building in order to model the behaviors for her faculty. One example she pointed to was during a recent technology roll out, where she was on the front line of working with the new resource.

Anna’s response to the interview question began by stating that she is out during drop off and pick up as often as she can be. She mentioned that she tries to walk the halls of the building as often as possible to model the behaviors she believes in. Timothy, another interview participant, spoke about working with one of his departments towards implementing a new curriculum. He personally worked with the department during the professional development work leading up to the implementation. As he said,

I was ‘dancing like a neuron’ in front of everybody because that – from a leadership perspective, if I’m asking you to do this training and saying it’s important, even though my direct contact with students and reading instruction is not –well, it doesn’t exist. It’s important that I was there.

Despite having no direct instructional contact with teachers or students, Timothy felt it was important that he “walk the walk” with the faculty of this department during their curriculum training. He believed that his actions of leading by example were an important element towards building his credibility among his faculty.

Participants also mentioned that their perceived behavior of modeling the expectations of their faculty contributed to their ability to encourage their faculty to take risks and experiment in the classroom and in their buildings. Several participants mentioned this in their interview responses and were coded under the theme of “Model the Behavior.” When he was short of coverage for a course, Erik took on the teaching responsibility himself in his building. It needed to be done, so he did it. He mentioned that he has tried to create actively a culture in his building where teachers feel comfortable trying new things. Jody mentioned that “good comes from bad” and that “...there is always this ebb and flow of not just coming from this office, this desk, but within and amongst themselves as well.” Both Jody and Gary spoke about the changes within the field of education, and how the profession changes constantly.

Jessica sends out weekly emails to her staff to keep up communication and to model the collaborative expectations she has for her faculty. Emily has modeled the conversations and interactions she expects her staff to have with students on a daily basis. Sarah found that she was becoming exhausted by her role and began modeling a more balanced approach to school with her building. Paul stated that he is “brutally honest,” and despite his message being hard to hear at times, it is important for him to model honesty as a type of behavior he expects from this faculty.

Vision. Five different participants mentioned a mindset, or philosophy, that motivated them in their role as principals. This sub-theme was categorized under the code “Quotes, etc.”

Emily's mindset has been to think about if what she does will matter to the students in 10 years. This incorporates not only what is taught instructionally, but also how she and her staff members treat students and the effect that this has on their perceptions in 10 years. Timothy's philosophy revolved around caring about wanting to make things better within his school. As he quoted, "Asbestos was a wonderful insulator but we don't use it anymore." Adam's philosophy also revolved around the theme of caring, and he has used quotes and lyrics surrounding this theme in his monthly newsletters. Anna responded to the interview question by stating, "You're only as good as yesterday." The following section highlights the third theme of Finding Statement 3: relationship building.

Finding Statement 3: Theme 3: Relationship Building

Participants' responses generated the theme of relationship building. The actions that participant's take throughout their day often aimed at working towards building cooperative relationships with their faculty. From this, the idea of empowering people emerged. Both Erik and Rich highlighted that transformational leadership incorporates enabling people the ability to perform their jobs. Erik mentioned, "I really think about empowering my staff to take ownership of the learning processes in the building and to help them feel empowered to make decisions." Rich also spoke about his ability to empower his staff and said, "I like grooming people for their next big thing." Adam used a combination of written and in-person techniques to praise his faculty, and he mentioned email, highlighting his staff during meetings, and that for larger recognitions he would praise faculty during board meetings. Lucas also mentioned a combination of ways in which he praises his faculty, including email, face-to-face conversations, and acknowledging people during faculty meetings and in weekly bulletins. Erik used a combination of means to communicate praise, and these included having staff present at faculty

meetings along with using the evaluation system. Nora has used combinations of written and in-person praise for her faculty. She has developed a culture of thanking people in her school, and this has allowed her to praise her staff with both written acknowledgements and verbal praise. Jessica began her role as principal by writing letters home to the families of her school to introduce herself and spent time inviting her faculty members to have informal conversations with her over the summer to immediately build trust and relationships before the school year began. Anna has worked with her faculty to build relationships and has mediated conversations among members that have had conflict in the past. Through conversations with this faculty, Timothy has developed relationships with this staff and he reiterated several times in his interview response that he valued conversations over sending out an email. Rich has tried to have conversations and make himself visible in order to develop trust and relationships in his building, and he stated that his daily interactions are what have helped him develop cooperative relationships with his staff.

Acknowledgment. The idea that the little things add up emerged from participant responses. Samantha's effort into building relationships with her faculty has added up, and as a result, she has been able to work through tougher conversations with faculty members during the course of the year. Doug also mentioned in his interview response that, "It's those little things you don't realize when you say something..." that add up in a colleague's mind. He learned that the little "Hey, good job's" that he says to faculty members add up more than he realized. Peggy acknowledged that this is a weak area for her and will try to praise them for how much she values them, in addition to publicly praising them for specific acts or events. Nora also highlighted the idea that the little things add up, and she stated, "I think that's where you just have to kind of earn that trust through hundreds and hundreds of interactions every week."

Jody mentioned that her praise to her faculty is “it’s not extraordinary but there’s something.” Rosalie mentioned that she tries to find authentic things that will add up in the ways she facilitates praise in her building. She has begun working as a facilitator to develop little fixes to change and will praise the work of the whole faculty effort together. Timothy highlighted the 212 spotlight that recognizes faculty members for going above and beyond in their role. This program also allows faculty members to recognize other faculty members, and through this, the little elements of the school community are acknowledged.

The idea of time developed from the interview data as it related to giving school community members the time needed to complete their jobs effectively and efficiently. Jody’s example provided in answering the interview question mentioned how she acknowledged that her faculty might need more time when rolling out a new technology initiative. Jessica stated, “You have to work with what you have. I don’t know that in any organization you’re going to get 100 percent.” Emily mentioned her ability to provide the necessary resources for her staff in her interview response, while Sarah’s first few months of exhaustion led her to acknowledge and be aware of her teachers work and life balance. Phil mentioned that the relationship he has developed with his staff has allowed them to understand the responsibility of his position, and in turn, he is able to respect their hard work, time, and dedication. Margaret has remained mindful of the tasks she asks of her veteran teachers as opposed to her newer staff, as she does not want to place her new teachers in an uncomfortable position.

Doug has worked to make sure his praise to his faculty is authentic and has told teachers that “I’m validating her (you) now and I’m saying I trust you. It’s those little things that help do that.” Paul tries to ensure that his praise is authentic and he tries to be careful that he does not “overdo it” while at the same time making sure his praise is meaningful. Monica encouraged her

leadership team to take a salary freeze in an authentic and meaningful authentic gesture to provide tangible benefits to the rest of her faculty.

Rosalie, Jody, and Paul each mentioned non-public ways in which they acknowledge their faculty for a job well done. Each participant mentioned a personal, written acknowledgement of their appreciation to their faculty and staff. Paul uses little cards that he physically writes out to his staff after an event or performance happen. He leaves these in his faculty's mailboxes, as he sees this as a more personal, alternate form to sending out an email. Jody praised her faculty publicly, and she acknowledges people as best she can. Rosalie's faculty does not like to be recognized publicly, so she writes personal thank you cards and notes to them in order to acknowledge their efforts.

Erik and Nora each mentioned that to them, having their faculty present at a faculty meeting was a way in which they praise their staff for their good work. Nora made it a "norm" at her faculty meetings to have her teachers present in front of their peers for the work they are doing in school. She has also had her faculty thank each other individually within the faculty meeting in order to avoid giving general statements to the entire group. Erik used faculty meetings as opportunities for professional development and has his faculty present and share their work throughout the year in this forum.

Trust and Respect. The values of trust and respect emerged from the participant responses. Jason has "learned who the informal leaders in the faculty are, who carry a lot of weight with other faculty members through developing cooperative relationships." Lucas used his daily morning meetings with his leadership team to connect at the start of each day and used it as an opportunity to "be in each other's company." When Monica began her role in the school, she needed to develop trust and relationships with her leadership team and began by changing

the structure of that group. She “wanted to get to know the school through her own lens and not the lens of other people.” Phil has worked to problem solve with his faculty, which has developed because of the established trust in the building. He has tried to create the culture where people are comfortable approaching him with concerns and issues.

The ideas of being accessible, approachable, and visible emerged from the interview responses. Monica wanted people to have a chance to get to know her and relocated the physical location of her office in order to be more approachable through her open door policy. Rosalie created a space where collaboration among her team members could occur, and in her interview response, she states she has worked to create opportunities and remain accessible to help her faculty with the requirements and responsibilities that bog them down. Rich said that, “I think the more they see you in there the more that they believe that you’re there just to help them or just that you’re going to be out and about.”

Annie mentioned that her “door is always open” and that her staff take advantage of that to approach her on a wide variety of topics. Samantha mentioned the value she has found regarding the conversations she had with faculty members prior to her job beginning, and also mentioned in her interview response that a valuable piece of her role “is just being around.” Margaret highlighted a unit her faculty worked on involving the Hudson River, and she brought in experts in order to give her faculty the knowledge they needed to feel confident to take the risk throughout the course of the unit. Jody was also a participant who cited communication as a key element to her ability to empower her faculty to take risks, and this enables the flow of communication to develop more organically among her faculty, rather than from her desk as principal. Robert’s initial comment was “a lot of that work goes sight unseen.”

Additional aspects of leadership that emerged from the interview questions were the idea of keeping a balance, and delegating, as an aspect of leadership that principals identified as being deficient in. Rory stated that he has worked on delegating and mentioned that he has had to work on trusting the delegation to be efficiently completed. Margaret's first word in the interview response was "Delegating," and she followed up by stating that it has always been her problem. She spoke about creating a better balance, in particular giving more responsibility to her assistant principals. Rosalie finds that she is spread very thin because she says "Yes" to everything and because of this sometimes has a mismatched balance. Chris mentioned that he is trying to balance his responsibilities in an effort to not appear short or abrupt to his faculty.

Participants also felt that making time for different stakeholders and building relationships played a role in their perceptions of transformational leadership. In his interview response, Rory also reflected on his ability to reflect continuously on what happened during the day when he stated, "My default at the end of the day is really sit back and say what worked well? Why did it work well? What was bad? Why was it bad? That's kind of the process that I embrace every day." Samantha stated, "I would like to get people to be collaborative, not collegial." Chris has worked to make time for people while balancing his responsibilities. He does not want to appear short or abrupt in the moment, and he stated, "This is something I work on in the sense that there are four things going on." Gary has had to develop different relationships with his colleagues as he worked to transition from dean to principal. He worked to make time for people to develop different relationships because he knew he needed to show "the side of me that is not drill sergeant—the scowling 'I will cut you down to your knees' that I've got some true caring personality." Gary's background as a dean and a disciplinarian led him to

work consciously towards building new, and different, relationships with his colleagues when he took on his new role as principal.

Participants identified the idea of putting yourself out there and meeting new people as a way in which they continue to challenge themselves in their roles as principals. Monica mentioned that “being vulnerable” has enabled her to continue to grow, while Jason’s ability to gain the perspectives of regional principals has allowed him to gain different perspectives on the job. Rory stated that, “every year he is always looking to try to add something to continue to grow,” while Robert also values his time meeting with regional principal groups as a growth opportunity. Jody stated that there is always a challenge in schools, and that she has learned a lot from developing different relationships with her peers along the way. Anna has put herself out there to learn different educational changes in order to bring them back to her faculty to implement.

Participants valued the support and collaboration they have with other people when asked to consider what continued to motivate them on difficult days. The practical application of theories motivates Kyle, and he stated, “It doesn’t work for me but when you hear something and then you practice it. That’s what inspires me.” Rosalie referenced a piece of advice she received from a former superintendent who used to say that, “wisdom lies within, that we have the answers if we talk to the right people on the ground.” Jessica’s interview response referenced that she is a teacher of adults, and the mentality that they are all in this together. Margaret phrased her incorporation of team members in a different light when she stated, “You might not like that person but you want to befriend them because that helps move change along.”

Erik’s reflection focused on his work with his faculty, and he responded, “I think it’s just very important that I walk the walk with teachers. That’s not just in philosophy. That’s in

action.” Henrik has drawn inspiration and motivation from the current superintendent he is working with, whom he looks up to and believes in. Sarah stated her collaboration with people and mentioned that she has told her faculty, “We are not bad people. We all make mistakes. We can fix it and move forward.” Jason’s response to the interview question included his reflection on collaborating with people, and he said, “We are doing good for people.” Peggy stated in response to the question that she works well within the teams at her school, and Vinny’s response mentioned the various groups of constituents he is motivated by when he collaborates with colleagues in his role as principal.

Several participants mentioned that their faculty would describe them as caring and calm. Nora said her staff would use the word “compassionate,” while Samantha’s first response was “thoughtful.” Margaret used the words “dedicated and invested” when answering the interview question, while Paul said “fair and consistent.” Emily used the word “compassion” as the final element of her interview response, while Anna said that her faculty might say that, “I love all the things that they do.” “Supportive and nurturing” were two of the words Annie said her faculty would use to describe her, while Gary said one of the words people would use to describe him is calm.

Participants felt that empowering their faculty members while combining this with the attribute of respect was an additional way in which they encourage faculty members to take risks and experiment. In responding to the interview question, several participants mentioned this in their qualitative response. Doug highlighted that the most important element in allowing his faculty to take risks is trust, and in fostering trust among his staff, he empowers them to take instructional risks.

Several participants spoke about the element of trust in working to build relationships with faculty before they felt safe, supported, and comfortable enough to take risks. Doug mentioned that there has to be trust in place before his faculty will take risks. Samantha agreed with this element of leadership and mentioned, “That’s the relationships. If you have the relationship and you have the trust and we are starting to change our own thinking that you can learn anything, you can get good at anything.” Samantha stated that due to the relationships she has cultivated among her faculty, most of them feel comfortable taking risks and trying new things out. This trust building relationship has allowed several participants to enable their faculty to take risks and experiment in the classroom.

Participants cited different avenues and resources when attempting to build relationships and trust among their faculty members. Adam’s response highlighted his ability to self-reflect on his own attributes as a leader. In working with his faculty to take risks, experiment, and try new things he tells his staff, “Hey, I fail with you. If I fail or if you fail at something then I’ve failed you and I didn’t lead you the right way. Let’s figure out how to do it.” He recognized the human element when figuring out how to work with his faculty to get the most out of them. In Rory’s response, he quickly mentioned the word trust as a critical element of his ability to work with his faculty. He said, “I think trust is one of the more important characteristics, attributes, qualities that you really need to focus on when you’re going through a transformative process.” Samantha also mentioned trust when responding to the interview prompt by stating, “That’s the relationships. If you have the relationship and you have the trust and we are starting to change our own thinking that you can learn anything, you can get good at anything.” Samantha has worked in her building to build trusting relationships as the foundation for her teachers, and from this stepping-stone encourages them to take instructional risks.

Several other participants also echoed the effect of trust, respect, and empowerment in their ability to encourage their faculty and staff to take risks and experiment. Henrik spoke about working to empower two new assistant principals so that they understand their roles while feeling encouraged and empowered to succeed in them. Sarah spoke about working with a Spanish teacher to help her navigate her additional responsibilities in order to facilitate smaller changes within the building. Informing people via conversations was one way that Paul cited as one of the strategies that he utilizes when empowering his faculty, and Timothy mentioned using faculty meetings as opportunities to encourage his faculty to try new things.

The human element emerged during the responses, as several participants cited that the conversations they have with colleagues are something that they are using to challenge themselves. Participants are working to get out of the office and build relationships with people. The conversations and dialogue that participants perceive themselves to be efficient in are elements that help build relationships, further enhancing participants' credibility among their faculty. Participants mentioned that these conversations are not always structured meeting times, but informal moments where they meet faculty and staff outside of their office space. Rich highlighted his time during "mulch patrol" each day as an opportunity to speak with his faculty in an informal setting. During afternoon dismissal, Rich makes it a point to get out of his office and stand on the mulch with his faculty as the students are dismissed for the afternoon. Rich also said, "I try to be outside in the hallways between classes as much as I can. I think that it's just walking around. You've got to build that relationship." He recognized that this is an area of his role as principal that he is still working to challenge himself with on a daily basis. Doug mirrored the same thoughts as Rich in that he is working to build relationships with colleagues

and values the communication and conversations he has with the faculty in his building. Doug stated,

...but it really comes down to colleagues. You are just kind of bantering about the ideas and frustrations you have, and before you know it, somebody says one thing and now you're latching onto it...building relationships and communicating with colleagues.

Despite the value principal participants place on the human aspects of transformational leadership, it is an area that some are actively working to improve on as part of their leadership abilities. Annie spoke about the comfort level she feels instructionally within her building, but that she continues to rely heavily on her instructional coaches to guide both her and her staff with the changes taking place in education. She has combined conversations with colleagues in an effort of support, encouragement, and proactivity with observing others and then pushing herself in the building with her faculty to get better. As Annie stated, "So, I just tried to balance that, try to listen, try to learn from my colleagues on how they do things, get pointers from them." As a principal, she has acknowledged that her staff are a resource that continue to push and challenge her as a leader in her building.

The researcher hoped to have the participants recognize different areas in which they were still working to grow in as part of the findings of transformational leadership in the study. As was mentioned, the change process is a main component of transformational leadership. In order to analyze the participant data to the fullest extent, principals were asked to share individual areas of growth for themselves and this element added further trustworthiness to the findings.

Several participants felt that their faculty would say their leadership style is collaborative and inspiring. Jason used the word collaborative, while Jody said her faculty would say that she

is “friendly, open, (and) willing to listen.” Samantha mentioned that she hoped her faculty would say collaborative, while Anna’s first statement to answer the interview question was “available to them.” In her response, Nora said that she hoped her faculty would say that she is “some version of creative or imaginative.”

Chris has worked to develop cooperative relationships with his staff and did this by encouraging his staff not to operate in “silos” but to encourage more collaboration among the members of his faculty. Adam has worked to build cooperative relationships over time, and he stated, “You keep selling things to people because you know in your heart of hearts it’s the right thing to do.” Sarah developed cooperative relationships through empowering her faculty to take ownership over different elements of the schedule and through giving groups of faculty members a voice to provide feedback on what they needed to best do their jobs.

Jody has developed trust among her faculty and when asked the interview question responded by stating, “I would say I’m pretty good at it.” She went on to describe her school as a family due to the connectedness that the entire building has. Vinny has realized that he is a part of a bigger team and that what works best for one person may not work best for everyone. He has developed cooperative relationships by trying to reach a middle ground. Gary mentioned the word brotherhood when describing how the school community embraces all members, and he included his faculty in that statement. Gary has worked to “build a community of faculty that were concerned and interested in each other as human beings.” Emily has worked to develop cooperative relationships through modeling the conversations and actions she expects from the faculty members in her building.

Annie has a healthy sense of humor, which she has utilized to develop cooperative relationships with her faculty, and she perceives herself as approachable, of which her staff takes

advantage. Paul entered his school with the mantra “we’re in this together” and it has taken hold of the culture in the building. He mentioned that the recent leadership consistency in the school has allowed him to develop cooperative relationships with his colleagues. Margaret has morphed her leadership team to adapt to the changes in the school, and through the use of different meetings and taking the time to listen to different school stakeholders has developed cooperative relationships in her school.

Samantha had meetings when she first began her role to meet each person in her building individually and to address any issues head on right away. As she started to develop cooperative relationships with her staff, she realized that being around and knowing people were two critical elements to developing relationships with her faculty. Erik provided time for his faculty to meet together especially when approaching new instructional strategies. He allowed for his teachers to meet cooperatively in order to schedule planning time for them to work together. Jody reflected that she feels she is good at developing cooperative relationships, and that she would describe her school as a family due to the connectedness the building has. Nora stated in the interview response, “You have personal relationships with people.” She then commented that at times she has had trouble with her veteran teachers, but wants people in her school that are going to create a “positive buzz and energy” for the students and their learning.

Vision for the School and Themselves. The sub-theme of the value of communication and conversations when speaking about the vision emerged from the participant responses to the interview question. Timothy has worked to build relationships with this faculty through “conversations and collaboration.” Doug mentioned that he is “always building up those conversations” as he works with his staff, while Phil highlighted that, “The conversations are the most important thing to start with” when aligning a vision with different elements of the school

community. Anna also spoke about the value of communication in articulating her vision when she said, “It’s really just telling them every single thing all the time and just reiterating all the time.”

Relationship building and modeling behaviors were aspects principals cited as steps they have taken to help align their vision with their roles in the building. Doug came into his role as one of many principals within a span of a few years. The turnaround in leadership had taken a toll on the entire school community and he recognized this from the beginning. He described one of the first activities he conducted with his faculty in order to build open, honest, and trustworthy relationships to set a positive tone right away. During a faculty meeting, Doug created several buckets labeled with different aspects of the overall school community. Each faculty member was given \$100 of fake money to put into one bucket indicating where, or in what area, they would spend the money. Once each person’s money was placed in a bucket, groups were created to discuss where they placed their money and why. By doing so, Doug was able to sense where people perceived needs within the building and what people felt passionately about. As Doug stated, “That’s where we started to develop that commonality of the vision. Because then I knew which way I wanted to steer the vision, which ultimately goes back to it’s for the betterment of students.” Principals have a vision for where they would like to see their school go. However, from participant responses it emerged that there is a value of importance to ensuring that faculty member voices are heard and that leaders are aware of the broader school community before altering the vision of the school.

Participants were coded under the sub-theme of openness and building relationships as it related to the self-perceptions of their vision as their career began. Samantha responded to the question by stating, “One of the things that I think I do best is the relationships that I develop

with people.” Monica also mentioned the conversations she has had with her school community that have helped her to build openness and have given her a chance to articulate her vision. Nora worked with her staff to identify a need in their curricular offerings and through the relationships she built within her school community was able to “put it on the calendar” ahead of schedule.

Principals placed emphasis on the human elements of their jobs in relation to their self-perceptions of transformational leadership. Throughout the interview responses, the themes associated with the human aspects of leadership prevailed. Communication, visibility, accessibility, transparency, and trust were all actions between people that came about from the interview conversations. Rich’s initial response began with people and his ability to allow them to do their jobs as he provides the guidance they need to do it correctly. Doug was succinct in his response when he mentioned, “We are leading people to be better for students. It’s all about students.” As participants responded as to what their vision was as they began their position and career, and how they articulated that vision to their faculty, the intangible elements of leadership continued to surface. Jessica said,

I’ve got to live it. I’ve got to learn it. I’ve got to listen to my people. I have to learn the culture and I had to honor their culture. As things go on, then I’m going to change things.

Her acknowledgement of her faculty was forefront on her mind.

Rory’s work in his school has helped him work to align the vision with the mission. As he stated, “I really am a collaborative leader in a sense where people need to have input into the whole school.” Anna has focused on being present for her staff while keeping the philosophy of having an open door policy in order to build openness with her faculty. Timothy also mentioned that he has worked to develop collaborative relationships among his staff, but that “I struggle on

a regular basis with how to get input from the staff, and put something into place that matches, so we're all on the same page.” Erik also mentioned the idea of being open and building relationships in his interview response. He begins by asking who would like to be involved and he mentioned the idea of using data to help inform his final decisions.

Jody stated that she has an open door, and that she knows the little things matter. She also mentioned that “It’s also I think integral to surround yourself with people who are good for your vision.” Phil also has used different elements of leadership to build relationships with his faculty so that as a whole school “they are doing this to align what they are teaching as well as communicating to the people behind or ahead of them regarding what they are teaching and why.” Doug also built relationships among his faculty as he worked to implement his vision throughout the school community, while Jessica worked to build relationships after the previous turnaround with the people who held her position prior to her. Rich mentioned that, “his vision also had a lot to do with a climate of openness,” when he responded to the interview question.

The sub-theme of respect and trust emerged as participants responded to what their vision was as they began their role. Anna began by working over the summer to respond to the needs of her faculty, and this helped demonstrate to her staff that she respected, trusted, and appreciated them. Rory spoke about the value of respect and trust and has worked through the means of creating trust between students, teachers, and parents within his school community. By improving communication between different stakeholders, he has begun to align his schools vision and mission. Monica described herself as an anthropologist in the fact that she spent time during her first year on the job getting to know her school community. By building trust, respect, and communication within the walls of her school, she has been able to articulate her vision to her colleagues. Peggy worked to develop trust and respect in order to conceptualize her

vision with the school community. She was able to relate to her faculty as a former classroom teacher and used this to bring about her vision within the school to “create something even better.”

Henrik built relationships in order to help move the vision along, and he mentioned, “He doesn’t take credit for the whole thing but is proud to be at the top of it.” Annie mentioned that the vision involves developing trust and building relationships, and said, “Once I’ve got my foot in the door for a while and I know the players, I have built the relationships, trust is a continual thing that you earn.” Jason spoke about his belief system with regard to his vision and stated that there has to be mutual respect in order to make changes within the existing school community. Adam had worked to build trust among his faculty, but ended up having to terminate several employees, which was a challenging part of the change process in his school. Ultimately, the relationships he had built with this staff enabled the community to move forward with the bigger picture in mind.

Rich’s vision encompassed developing a climate of openness that kept the bigger school community picture in mind. As Rich mentioned, he explained decisions to his faculty and said, “I’m not doing it because I just feel like doing it.” Lucas also built relationships and stated, “there’s also my thinking that behavior changes before culture does and your feelings about it do.” Chris also worked to build relationships, and he mentioned this in reference to the overarching idea of keeping the big picture in mind of what is done on a daily basis and why people do it. His thoughts referred back to the school mission statement as well.

Timothy has built relationships with his faculty, and because of this, has dealt with the negative consequences of this when it comes to terminating employees. He mentioned, “It’s the worst part of the job.” The praise Paul gives to his faculty has developed over the years, and he

started his response by mentioning the book *Good to Great* by Jim Collins. Paul said that, “I remember distinctly a piece in that book about him saying that as a leader you cannot take praise or take credit for anything that happens.” Monica has encouraged her faculty, in particular her leadership team, to use their vacation time. She also built the relationship with her leadership team up enough to have all team members take a 1-year salary freeze in order for the school to put increases into the faculty salaries.

Samantha stated that she has worked to build up her relationships with faculty to help guide her through tougher face-to-face conversations that she has had. Doug retold a story about how one of his faculty members asked him if she might put together a ‘shout out’ wall. Although he did not want to take the lead on the project, he had an established relationship with her and this enabled him to allow her to put the project forward. Doug credited the relationship he had established with her as the catalyst for the project’s success.

Robert also has worked to build relationships with his faculty and students in order to give them opportunities publicly to shine. In particular, he mentioned a faculty member who has taken the lead with each grade level because of the relationship and encouragement Robert has provided as the principal. Peggy mentioned that praise is a weak area for her, but that she has used positive reinforcement to empower her faculty.

Rosalie worked with her faculty to bring them together, particularly if it is a whole-faculty effort. She mentioned that “You can do top-down and you can create buy-in by picking a few strategic people and things like that.” Annie said that she has developed relationships with her faculty and has worked to praise teams of teachers, not just individual faculty members. Nora has learned from experience on the best ways to praise people, in particular towards keeping the big picture in mind. She gave a poignant example of how the relationships she has

developed with her faculty have affected her role, in particular when it comes to terminating employees. Jody tries to praise people as best she can, and through her work knows that “everyone is doing everything.”

The value of listening and learning emerged from the findings for participants when speaking about their vision. Rory mentioned the value of listening to his faculty in response to the interview question, and he stated that, “So you need to let people be heard, you need to let people be involved.” Nora also mentioned that she has listened and learned from the feedback her faculty provide, and she believed this was happening in the adaptations taking place to mirror the changing world today. Erik also responded that it was important to listen and learn in his interview response, and he mentioned that “you don’t say ‘well, this stinks, so let’s just get rid of it.’”

Self-Perceptions. Participants’ self-perceptions of transformational leadership emerged from the interview responses. Jody has massaged the relationships she has developed at her school “through having lunch together, having the occasional after school social, whatever that may be, remembering the birthdays and the little holidays, and having the cards. All of those things matter.” Vinny has used conversations to reach middle ground with this faculty, which has proved tricky. He has realized that he is a part of a team, and he has encouraged his staff to come speak with him regarding what is bothering them. Gary has used conversations to draw faculty members out of the isolation of their classrooms in order to develop cooperative relationships throughout the building. Emily has worked to model the conversations with teachers that she would like them to be having throughout the school community, which she hopes will foster greater respect throughout the faculty.

Rory and Monica, while mentioning the value of conferences and workshops in their ability to grow as leaders, also highlighted a self-reflective element to their interview response. Rory responded that he “basically hasn’t stopped going to school since I was an undergraduate, and I love it.” He has continued to utilize all facets of his role in education in order to continue growing. Monica stated that one way she has grown is “just the ability to slow down to assess my own growth—being vulnerable.”

Another theme that emerged was the element of working to build relationships as a way to continue to challenge yourself as a leader. Rosalie has worked to pick what works best strategically for her and her teachers, and this has involved a combination of factors—including building relationships with the faculty in her building. Annie also has worked to build relationships with her staff as an element of what continues to challenge her in her role as leader, in particular understanding the layers of district leadership in her new environment. Rich has used little things such as poker chips to evenly distribute his time with faculty as a way in which he has worked to build relationships in this building. Kyle mentioned working with members of the board to build relationships and have conversations with another group of school stakeholders. Doug mentioned in his response that “the biggest really is talking to colleagues,” and he was worked to building relationships with his faculty during his time as principal.

Annie has worked to develop trust by modeling the behaviors herself particularly during recent school emergencies. She noted that her ability to stay calm, in turn, helped the staff to stay calm when the building recently lost water service. Lucas has modeled his faculty meetings to mirror what he expects to see teachers trying within their own classrooms. Samantha has worked to create trust among her faculty, particularly as it pertains to their work with the parent community.

Gary has worked to encourage his faculty to get out and participate in more in-service opportunities, and he is hoping to lead the way by running a few of these in-house himself in order to model the expectation for his faculty. Anna stated that she is both nurturing and supportive in nature to her staff, and this has helped her to get the most out of her faculty and staff. Timothy highlighted working with one of his departments in their training side by side with them in order to build trust among his teachers. As he stated, “I will be there with them, doing the training, walking step-by-step through it with them.” Henrik mirrored this statement when he said, “There’s not something that I would ask somebody to do in this place that I haven’t done myself or wouldn’t do myself really.” Chris gave an example of helping to physically break down a room in order for the next group using the space to have the time to set up.

The human element emerged among the responses to this question. Many participants mentioned that it comes back to people (students and teachers) and that you have to care about and focus on the kids. The little things, which may or may not be noticed, make a big difference. Participants also cited that as leaders, they have to be learners themselves. Peggy responded to the interview question, “I’m definitely a learner. I’m pretty reflective. I’m trying to strengthen myself where I see weakness.” Rory embraces the process of reflecting after every day to ask himself “...what worked well? Why did it work well? What was bad? What was it bad?” Erik is a learner himself in that he thinks, “It’s just very important that I walk the walk with teachers.” Adam uses different quotes in many of the publications he sends out to his school community, but as a learner, he continues to come back to the phrase “Never give up on a kid.”

Henrik also mentioned the value of conversations in developing cooperative relationships with his faculty. He asks them how he can support them and guide them in order for information

to be communicated. Margaret groups people together during different school sponsored moments to get different people communicating, and she has encouraged her staff to speak to each other on a more frequent basis. Samantha met with all members of her staff prior to beginning her role as principal, and she “relied on conversations with people and scheduling time to be able to do those towards what helped.” Lucas held daily morning meetings in order to get the temperature of his leadership team and allow the group to connect face-to-face before the school day began.

The coding category of soft skills was used to combine participant words such as humble, thoughtful, and understanding. Phil commented that he “always try[ies] to be understanding of people’s needs.” Rory said that his faculty would say that he is thoughtful, honest, and truthful, while Henrik stated that the first word that came to mind was the word humble. Henrik mentioned that his faculty would say, “I appreciate you coming here and being transparent and humble about things.” Henrik and Peggy both mentioned the word transparent as a word their respective faculty would use to describe their leadership style. After stating the word, Henrik followed up with the statement, “I try to keep faculty in the loop, and I hope kid centered.” Peggy also used the word transparent in how her faculty would describe her leadership style.

Participants identified themes involving being caring people as words their staff would use to describe their leadership style. Kyle’s initial response was “a person who helps me do my best.” Monica said, “I inspire them to be their best selves,” and Peggy’s first thought about her staff was “They love me, they do.” For both participants, their self-perceptions are that they are well intentioned. Sarah and Rosalie used the word “caring” while Adam used the exact phrase, “His heart is in the right place.” Chris said that his faculty would say he “has their best interests

in mind,” while Vinny also mentioned that his staff would agree that his “heart is in the right place.”

The elements of respect and honesty emerged from participants’ words as they spoke about how their faculty would describe their leadership style. Rosalie used the word respect, and said, “I really try not to give them anything that they don’t have to have as far as responsibilities and paperwork and things like that.” Rich commented that his faculty would say, “He lets us do what we want when we want,” while Monica mentioned that her faculty would say that she has “high standards.” Rory used the words honest and truthful in how his faculty would describe his leadership style, and Robert commented about trust throughout his response to the interview question regarding his faculty’s words to describe his leadership style.

Rich was categorized under the sub-theme of funny, as his response was the only one to mention this element in the interview question response. When asked the question, his immediate response was “funny” and he continued by stating that, “You’ve got to have fun in this job or it’ll kill you.” Lucas mentioned that he has a tendency to go too fast, and that his faculty might express concern over that aspect of his leadership style. Jody also mentioned several negative tilted comments in her perception of how her faculty would describe her leadership style. She stated that they would probably like more input in decision-making, and that at times they would probably say that they feel sterner discipline should be implemented.

Participants spoke about stronger elements in response to how their faculty would describe their leadership styles. Several participants used the word “fair,” and it was the first word that came to mind when Annie responded to the interview question. Gary answered the question by stating the following: “unflappable, calm, and probably fair.” Jason, Paul, and Emily’s first response were also the word “fair,” and Anna mentioned the word “fair” in her

overall interview question response as well. Several participants joked about wanting to bring members of their faculty in to answer the question for them, including Doug. His first word in response to the question was “fair,” and he followed it up by stating, “He lets us take risks.” Both Jessica and Erik also used the word “fair” as to how their faculty would describe them, and Erik said, “I’m very fair, but I have high expectations.”

Erik, Margaret, and Doug each spoke about how their individual faculty members would say they have high expectations and are dedicated to their work. Erik commented, “I’m very fair, but I have high expectations.” Doug mentioned that he believed his faculty might say that he is fair and that, “He lets us take risks. He always has your back.” Doug was conscientious of being aware of his school environment in order to know what would work best for his staff. Margaret’s response to the interview question also reflected the self-perception that her staff believes she is invested and dedicated, as those were the first two words that came to mind as she answered the question.

Several participants responded to the interview question with strong, definitive answers. Margaret and Samantha each responded definitively with the words “dedicated, invested” and “thoughtful, deliberate,” respectively. Paul’s response to the interview question was also definitive in that he is fair, consistent, and he gave himself a “B or B-” rating. Gary was assertive in his response to the interview question and was concise with his three-word response. Similarly, Jody was firm in her perceptions of how her faculty would view her and mentioned both the positive and negative in her response. Timothy used several one-word responses in his interview answer, and one word that emerged was “definitive.” Vinny believed that his faculty might say that he “takes too much onto his plate,” while Nora used the word strong to describe how her faculty would describe her.

Summary

The following study resulted in three finding statements. The first finding statement was that participant principals believe themselves to be, or are, transformational leaders. The first category was “No,” with a total of two responses. The second category was “At Times,” with a total of 12 responses. The third category was “Yes,” with a total of 13 responses. The second finding statement of the study was that change was a central tenet of the participant principals’ interpretations of transformational leadership. The six themes that emerged for the second finding statement were definition of transformational leadership, communication, collaboration, vision and big picture, transforming people, and self-perceptions. The third finding statement was that the intangible, human elements of leadership were a central tenet to the participant principals’ perceptions of transformational leadership. The first theme that emerged was communication, with the sub-themes of acknowledgment, building relationships, listening, and the value placed on communication. The second theme that emerged was model the behavior, with sub-themes of praise, visible/open, leading people, self-perceptions, and vision. The third theme that emerged was relationship building, with sub-themes of acknowledgment, trust and respect, vision for the school and themselves, and self-perceptions.

The human elements of leadership were prevalent throughout the survey and interview findings. Additionally, elements of change emerged as an aspect of transformational leadership of which participants were cognizant. Throughout the human elements, the aspects of communication, relationship building, listening, respect, trust, and collaboration all emerged as findings throughout the interview phase. The researcher found that the human elements of transformational leadership emerged from the research findings. Elements of change emerged from the findings and incorporated the themes of communication, collaboration, a vision and big

picture, transforming people, and the self-perceptions of participants. Participants referred to elements of communication, honesty, transparency, and respect throughout the interview questions asked of them. The following chapter highlights areas of future research as a result of the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter provides a summary of the current study and connecting conclusions of the self-perceptions of principals' transformational leadership traits and the ties to literature, implications, recommendations, and potential future research found from the study's findings. The chapter includes the study's three finding statements followed by the following organizational structure: a summary, implications, recommendations, and potential for future research ideas.

Overview: Literature, Implications, Recommendations, and Future Research

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the self-perceptions of principals' transformational leadership practices through a mixed methods case study design. The researcher aimed to gain an understanding of the phenomenon of transformational leadership specifically through the eyes of principal participants. The case was bound with two parameters. The first was that principal participants held their roles in schools within either Westchester County, New York or Fairfield County, Connecticut. Second, participants were school building principals. The phenomenon of transformational leadership was explored through the lens of these case study participants.

The research study was guided by one overarching research question and two sub-research questions. The over-arching research question was "How do building level participants' understand their perceptions of transformational leadership?" The first sub-research question was "What are building level leader participants' perceptions of their leadership practices based on their LPI survey responses?" The second sub-research question was "How are Kouzes and Posner's Five Pillars of Exemplary Leadership part of those perceptions?"

The researcher used the National Center for Education statistics to find the initial sample of participants who fit the parameters of the case study design. Participants were initially contacted through the SurveyMonkey platform and asked to complete the demographic survey and LPI forms. Participants who were identified as fitting the parameters of the case study and who had not completed the survey were contacted several other times through the SurveyMonkey platform in continued attempts to gain Phase 1 participants. The 42nd question on the quantitative survey asked participants whether they would be willing to volunteer to participate in Phase 2 of the research study (semi-structured individual interviews).

The study included three different instruments for data collection. First, 613 potential participants were asked to complete the demographic and LPI survey through the SurveyMonkey platform. The request was sent out through the platform multiple times in order to illicit a strong participant response rate. One hundred and thirteen participants responded to the request, while 110 completed the demographic and LPI surveys online. The researcher began contacting participants to schedule Phase 2 at regular intervals during the administration of Phase 1. Each participant who responded to question 42 with a “Yes” response was contacted via email with a Doodle link invitation to participate in Phase 2 of the study. From the initial participants who responded “Yes,” a total of 28 participants completed the semi-structured individual interviews.

From the qualitative individual interviews completed for the data collection of Phase 2, the three finding statements emerged from the participants’ words and examples. The finding statements, connections to literature, implications, recommendations, and potential future research are listed in the following sections with reference to each finding statement that emerged from the current study.

Major Finding Statement 1

Table 10 illustrates the major finding statement 1 with its connections to the literature, implications, recommendations, and future research suggestions.

Table 8

Finding Statement 1: Summary

Major Finding Statement	Literature Connections	Implications	Recommendations	Future Research
Participant principals believed themselves to be, or were, transformational leaders	(Anderson, 2017) (Baylor, 2012) (Dabke, 2016) (Kareem, 2016)	Participants perceived that transformational leadership behaviors have a positive effect on their job performance. School leaders may not be aware of any wider school implications.	Consider transformational leadership to be an element of principal preparation programs and as a similarly crucial component to daily school life as instructional leadership and capacity.	Investigate the curriculum of principal administrative preparation programs towards educating leaders about the importance of all facets of school leadership beyond instructional and curricular capacity. Create a study that directly compares principals' instructional leadership time/practices with transformational traits/time. Create curricular interventions specific to transformational leadership learning outcomes

Participant principals believed that they were, or were attempting to be, transformational leaders from the findings of the study. Principal participants were asked whether they considered themselves transformational leaders during Phase 2 of data collection. From their responses, the first finding statement emerged that principal participants considered themselves transformational leaders. Below are relevant connections to the literature, implications, recommendations, and potential areas for future research.

Literature Connections for Finding 1

Transformational leadership has been found to have a significant effect on learning organizations (Kareem, 2016). Related literature also found that educational leaders who demonstrated transformational leadership traits in their buildings have a more positive overall commitment from teachers (Bayler, 2012). Thirteen principal participants identified themselves as transformational leaders through a “Yes” response to the interview question as they perceived themselves as identifying as exhibiting this form of leadership. Onorato (2013) found that transformational leadership was the most used style of leadership from the sample of school principals.

In the current research, participant principals reflected on their perceptions of how their staff members perceived the participants as leaders. The researcher did not collect any data from the subordinates of the participant principals. The review of the literature suggested that when subordinates perceive their superiors as embodying the elements of transformational leadership, there was a significant positive correlation between the leadership traits and the perceptions (Dabke, 2016). There was positive support found for principals to continue to focus on developing transformational leadership traits due to the changing elements of their role in

educational settings currently (Anderson, 2017). The first finding statement that emerged from the study affirmed this literature.

Implications for Finding 1

Within the current study, when participants perceive that transformational leadership behaviors have a positive influence on their job performance (Participants mentioned aspects of transformational leadership such as trust, relationship building, and communication as examples of how they exemplify this form of leadership in their daily roles). They may not be aware of the effect their transformational leadership behaviors have on the communication, relationship building, and trust built within their schools. In addition, principal participants perceived that they exhibited transformational leadership traits and this leadership style has numerous potential implications for school leadership. The review of literature found that teachers have a positive view of school leaders who exhibit transformational leadership traits (Bayler, 2012; Dabke, 2016).

Recommendations for Finding 1

Participants in the current study, who had achieved their role as principal, completed different variations of coursework and certifications to reach their job title status. The results of the study found that although principals believed themselves to exhibit the traits of transformational leadership, this perception does not necessarily equate to the knowledge and skills that they gained from their administrative coursework or certifications. One recommendation would be for graduate and administrative programs to consider transformational leadership to be a critical component of instructional leadership. As the findings of the current study and the related literature suggest, the transformational leadership traits of school

principals' play a role in their capacity to fulfill the different aspects that their jobs, beyond the instructional realm.

Future Research for Finding 1

From the first finding statement, there are several areas of potential future research. First, there is a need to investigate the curriculum of principal administrative preparation programs to investigate the facets of school leadership. In particular, future research should focus on leaders' capacity beyond curricular or instructional knowledge. Principal participants who identify as perceiving themselves as transformational leaders need continued development of principals' knowledge beyond curriculum instruction specifically on transformational leadership curricula.

Future research might also directly compare the amount of time principals spend on instructional or curricular elements of their day when compared with the time spent fostering elements of transformational leadership in their buildings. Potential research might focus on curricular interventions specific to transformational leadership outcomes, specifically in understanding the amount of time principal participants spend on each form of leadership in their daily jobs. The current study found that participants self-identified as transformational leaders, but participants acknowledged that lack of time added to their inability to focus on honing and exhibiting transformational leadership traits on a daily basis.

Summary for Finding 1

The first finding statement that emerged from the data suggested that participant principals exhibited the traits and practices of transformational leadership. Principal participants perceived that their transformational leadership traits had a positive effect on their faculty and staff. A recommendation from the finding statement was that principal preparation programs should dedicate additional time and resources into developing the transformational leadership

traits of future school leaders. This practice would support the importance of transformational leadership as an element of school leadership. Future research might be conducted to further understand the amount of time school principals spend on instructional aspects of the job compared with developing their own transformational leadership traits. By doing so, future school leaders might become more aware of the effect of their own leadership development prior to taking on a school principal job title.

Major Finding Statement 2

The second major finding statement that emerged was that change was a central tenet to the participant principals' interpretations of transformational leadership. Participants referenced change throughout their interview responses, beginning with the definition of transformational leadership to specific examples of how each participant worked to enact effective change within their schools. The data related to the second finding statement were consistent with the literature (Baglibel et al., 2014; Evans, 2001; Khatri, 2005; Velasco et al., 2012) and confirmed that change continued to be a central aspect to the transformational leadership traits of school principals. Table 11 below highlights the major findings, connections to literature, implications, recommendations, and potential for future research connected with the second major finding of the study.

Table 9

Finding Statement 2: Summary

Major Finding Statement	Literature Connections	Implications	Recommendations	Future Research
Change was a central tenet to the participant principals' interpretations of transformational leadership.	(Evans, 2001) (Velasco et al., 2012) (Senge, 2006)	While change has an effect on daily school life, principals may not be acknowledging this in their daily schedules, interactions, and routines. Change affects teachers, however the influence - or acknowledgment of the effect - from the perspectives of principals may not be equal.	Allow principals to develop the skills needed to effectively implement school change. Create PD opportunities and support a system wide focus on organizational change/systems approach to change.	Evaluate the effectiveness of various types of school change about understanding the largest obstacles school leaders face when implementing change and working through the change process. Create a research study that directly compares transformational leadership traits with the time and elements involved in a specific school change initiative. Transformational leaders need to understand organizational change theory and the ways in which it functions within a school organization.

Connections to Literature for Finding 2

Principal participants, in the current study, highlight the elements of change associated with the term “transformational leadership” and referred to the change process. Although these principals sometimes discussed change as a critical element to their roles, often most principals are untrained on how to go about effective school change, and the risks change involves leave school reform, and change, a rare element in schools (Evans, 2001). As the person responsible for school change, principals find themselves at the forefront of school reform efforts and are often asked to lead projects regarding school change (Evans, 2001). The participants in the current study similarly perceived their roles involving school change and considered the steps taken to effectively implement change within their schools. Participants mentioned the element of time as a critical factor to any school change. Participant principals recognized that change does not happen overnight, and that time must be utilized as an element of a successful school change process.

Participants expressed that the change process in connection with their ideas of vision were important, regarding both their own and a shared school vision. Building a vision without the concepts of organizational change and a “systems thinking approach” result in the need for deeper understanding and development to enact successful implementation of change (Senge, 2006). The smallest aspects of the organization should be considered and understood within the context of a systems thinking approach in order to gain a better understanding of individual perceptions and thought processes (Senge, 2006). Principal participants acknowledged the need to keep the perspectives and opinions of different school stakeholders evident in decisions; however, they acknowledged that this process needed to be balanced with keeping the larger picture in mind.

Implications for Finding 2

Finding Statement 2 indicated that change was an element of principals' perceptions of transformational leadership and was an important element of transformational leadership supported by the literature review (Evans, 2001; Senge, 2006; Velasco et al., 2012). Participants referred to the change process, both as a definition of transformational leadership as well as an element of school leadership that affects the entire organization. Schools function as organizations that are affected by school reform changes, which are sometimes ineffective and which create skepticism from faculty members (Evans, 1996).

Change has an effect on daily school life; however, principals may not be acknowledging this effect in their daily schedules, interactions, and routines. Participants discussed the different ways in which school change is undertaken and the steps and processes used to implement change in the least disruptive and most effective ways. The acknowledgement of the effect the change process has on teachers from the perspectives of school principals are not in line. Therefore, participant principals may not be aware of the effect their own transformational leadership traits have on the change implementation process.

Recommendations for Finding 2

Participants in the current study had completed the appropriate coursework and earned the appropriate degree to achieve the role as principal. One recommendation from the results of the study was to allow school principals the time and opportunities needed to develop the appropriate skills needed to effectively implement various forms of school change. During graduate and administrative coursework, change is discussed; however, principals should have the opportunity to focus on targeted professional development opportunities to learn the appropriate steps effective organizational change requires. Another recommendation emerging

from the results of the research study was to allow school principals the opportunity to focus on organizational change as an aspect of professional development. The effect that the change process has on the principals who implement it and the teachers in the building is an area of continued development for school principals moving forward.

Future Research for Finding 2

Master's level administrative programs might evaluate the coursework and attention paid to effective organizational change in schools. Principals in the current study noted the focus on the process of change for their schools to grow and evolve; however, certification programs and graduate level coursework may not meet the practical applications needed to mirror a school principal's reality. It may be helpful to evaluate the effectiveness of various types of school change to better understand the largest obstacles school leaders face when implementing and working through the change process. Graduate level and certification programs might reevaluate their coursework topics and structural guidelines to explore different ways to incorporate the concepts of organizational change into the principal preparation development. Additionally, future research might compare the largest obstacles principals face when implementing change in comparison with the transformational leadership traits of school leaders to gain a better understanding of the correlation between the two.

Summary for Finding 2

The second finding statement of the current study found that participants perceived change to be a central tenet of transformational leadership. Participants noted that change requires sufficient time within schools and that there are different stakeholder groups whom leaders must involve in order to implement effective school change. The literature aligned with the findings of the study in validating the aspects of change that make it difficult for school

leaders to implement, such as the time participants need to dedicate towards making school change effective (Evans, 1996). In addition, the literature reviewed pointed to the potential recommendations and future research needed to educate school leaders on specific ways to implement system-wide organizational change (Senge, 2006). The following section highlights the third finding statement, connections to literature, implications, recommendations, and potential future research.

Major Finding Statement 3

The current research study's third finding statement focused on the intangible elements of transformational leadership and the role they play in a principals' daily routine. Participants noted elements such as communication, trust, vision, and relationship building as traits and behaviors that allowed them to execute effective transformational leadership in their school leadership roles. When acknowledging the different ways in which they each exhibited transformational leadership traits, participant referenced different intangible elements of leadership beyond participants' instructional knowledge or capacity. The data related to the third major finding statement were consistent with the literature (Devos & Bouckenooghe, 2009; Goleman et al., 2013; Green & Cooper, 2012; Mehdinezhad & Mansouri, 2016; Mombourquette, 2017; Saġnak, 2010; Smylie et al., 2016; Spillane & Hunt, 2010; Terek et al., 2015). Participants perceived that the intangible elements of transformational leadership were traits that participant principals identified as being key to their transformational leadership abilities. Table 12 highlights finding statement 3 as it relates to existing literature, implications, recommendations, and future research ideas.

Table 10

Finding Statement 3: Summary

Major Finding	Literature Connections	Implications	Recommendations	Future Research
The intangible, human elements, of leadership were a central tenet to the participant principals' perceptions of transformational leadership.	(Devos & Bouckenooghe, 2009) (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2013) (Green & Cooper, 2012) (Mehdinezhad & Mansouri, 2016) (Mombourquette, 2017) (Saĝnak, 2010) (Smylie et al., 2016) (Spillane & Hunt, 2010) (Terek et al., 2015)	When principals are aware of elements of leadership beyond their own instructional practices, there is an effect on their own self-efficacy.	Create professional development opportunities or administrative conferences educating principals about the benefits of focusing on intangible leadership elements/PD on emotional intelligence/social emotional	Explore the effectiveness of transformational leadership coursework and conferences. Create opportunities for professional development in the area of transformational leadership. Create a research study that focuses on one specific intangible transformational leadership element to investigate its effect (for example; a study that focused solely on communication without connection to other leadership elements in schools).

Connections to Literature for Finding 3

Participants in the current study discussed transformational leadership in reference to the intangible elements of school leadership as traits that, when utilized effectively, enhanced principal participants' leadership. A leader's ability to handle different relationships in their workplace involves more than one's ability to be friendly or possess strong social skills, but is also about the ability to move people in the right direction toward a common goal or vision (Goleman et al., 2013). Principal leadership behaviors were found to have a significant positive relationship on teachers' sense of self-efficacy (Mehdinezhad & Mansouri, 2016), and similarly transformational leadership was found to be a significant predictor of ethical school climate (Sağnak, 2010). The intangible elements of transformational leadership were found to have a positive influence on both principals and schools (Goleman et al., 2013; Mehdinezhad & Mansouri, 2016). Participant principals perceived the positive effect of the intangible elements of transformational leadership as indicated from the findings of the current research study. The participants in the current study perceived themselves as exhibiting the intangible elements of leadership; however, no data were collected from faculty and staff to validate the principals' perceptions.

Implications for Finding 3

Researchers would find the third major finding statement of the study to be of interest as it indicated an acknowledgement of principal participants of the factors outside of instructional knowledge and capacity that play a role in principals' leadership abilities. District level leadership and educational programs at the university and graduate level might take interest in the perceived effect principal participants indicated regarding their own transformational leadership traits.

The intangible elements of transformational leadership were ones that principal participants mentioned in their interview responses as a self-reflection of their own leadership traits in the current study. Participants mentioned that they actively attempted to incorporate these traits into their daily routines and highlighted the effect the intangible elements had on how their employees viewed them. While participants acknowledged the benefits that elements such as communication, vision, and relationship building have on their leadership abilities, there was an acknowledgment of a lack of time to accomplish every task while being able to cultivate as a transformational leader.

School principals should be aware of elements of leadership beyond their own instructional practices. The elements of communication, collaboration, vision, trust, and relationship building play a role of their own self-efficacy, and there was an effect on how principal participants view their transformational leadership traits and practices.

Recommendations for Finding 3

Participants in the current study highlighted several intangible and difficult to quantify leadership traits as central elements of effective transformational school leaders. Participants were aware of their own transformational leadership traits despite not having the time in their roles to dedicate towards fostering the learning and growth of the traits. One recommendation that emerged from the findings was creating additional professional development opportunities for school administrators to become knowledgeable regarding the effect that the smaller, intangible elements of leadership have on their ability to successfully complete their jobs. By creating professional discourse around the topic of transformational leadership, principals might become more cognizant of their own use of intangible leadership traits. Another recommendation that emerged from the findings of the study was that school principals should

have additional opportunities to become better educated on the benefits and effect their own social and emotional development has on their work as school leaders. Through principals' development of social and emotional growth, greater attention can be placed on the role these intangible elements play in the daily lives of principal participants.

Future Research for Finding 3

There are several potential areas of future research generated from the third finding statement. First, researchers might explore the effectiveness of transformational leadership coursework at the graduate level as well as within the realm of administrative certification coursework. Additionally, future research might be conducted to create more opportunities for professional development focused on the subject of transformational leadership and school administrators. The potential future research regarding the third finding statement would likely add to the effect elements of transformational leadership (such as, communication, visibility, relationship building, etc.) have on an organizational institution.

Future research might also be conducted that highlights one particular intangible leadership trait in order to gain a deeper perspective of the effect that trait has on an educational institution. For example, a future researcher might pinpoint communication as the trait of focus and conduct a research study that examines principal participants' communication within the lens of its effect on the principal participants' transformational leadership behaviors. This research would allow subsequent work to be conducted in order to pinpoint which, if any, of the intangible leadership elements has a larger effect than the others.

Summary for Finding 3

The third finding statement emerged from the data and tied to the literature regarding the effect that the intangible elements of transformational leadership have on participant principals'

effectiveness in their jobs. The findings connected to the literature that supported the intangible elements of leadership, such as communication and trust, as critical elements of transformational school leadership. School leaders in the current study were aware of their own transformational leadership traits and perhaps that more work should be done towards educating school leaders on the effect of the intangible elements of leadership on their school buildings. Professional development opportunities and administrative preparation programs should work to create avenues for future school leaders to become more aware of their own transformational leadership traits prior to their role as school leaders. Potential future research might involve a detailed analysis of one of the elements of transformational leadership participants identified as being critical from the findings of this study. Future research might be conducted on the amount of time school leaders spend communicating on a daily or weekly basis in order to compare this trait with other instructional aspects of their roles.

Limitations of this Study

Several limitations to the mixed methods study warrant mentioning. First, the sample of the study was bound to the parameters of the case study design limited to participants from the counties of Westchester, New York and Fairfield, Connecticut and the phenomenon of interest for the case—transformational leadership. This may limit the ability for the study to be transferable to larger populations, and caution should be advised in generalizing the results of the study to broader groups of principal participants. The goal of the study was to gain the firsthand perceptions of principal participants' transformational leadership practices and the study was limited in that the results of the bound case design should not be generalized to a larger population of principal participants. In addition, the researcher did not gain the perspectives of teachers or staff to compare the perceptions of the principal participants. Therefore, the

perceptions found from the data analysis highlight one bound, contextual case study of the perceptions of transformational leadership according to the participants, not other stakeholders.

The researcher used three different sources of data collection in both quantitative and qualitative formats. This process allowed for the triangulation of data from different sources; however, the emphasis of data collection and analysis was placed on the qualitative data collected during Phase 2 to develop the perceptions of the phenomenon of transformational leadership from the perspectives of school principal participants.

Overall Implications

The current research study was used to investigate the self-perceptions of principal participants' transformational leadership practices. The researcher utilized three different data collection points that included detailed individual interviews with 28 participants who produced the perceptions of transformational leadership from the perspective of principal participants bound by the case study design. Three finding statements emerged that incorporated sub-themes that emerged from the qualitative data analysis. The significance of the findings were discussed in relation to the literature reviewed for the study, implications were identified, recommendations were made, and potential future research was suggested and developed for potential work to be done regarding transformational leadership in schools.

The implications from the finding statements focused on the need for principal leaders to be cognizant of their own transformational leadership trait development. Implications from the current study cannot be made regarding the effect transformational leadership traits had on teachers' perceptions of school climate, culture, or leadership. However, as participants acknowledged, given the effect intangible leadership elements had on their daily routines, it would be logical for preparation programs to focus resources and time towards helping future

school leaders develop these traits. Through the acknowledgment of principal participants regarding the effect and importance of their self-perceptions of transformational leadership in schools, the implications point to the continued focus on the development of the traits for school leadership. Figure 13 below illustrates the three finding statements in connection with the phenomenon of transformational leadership found from the current study.

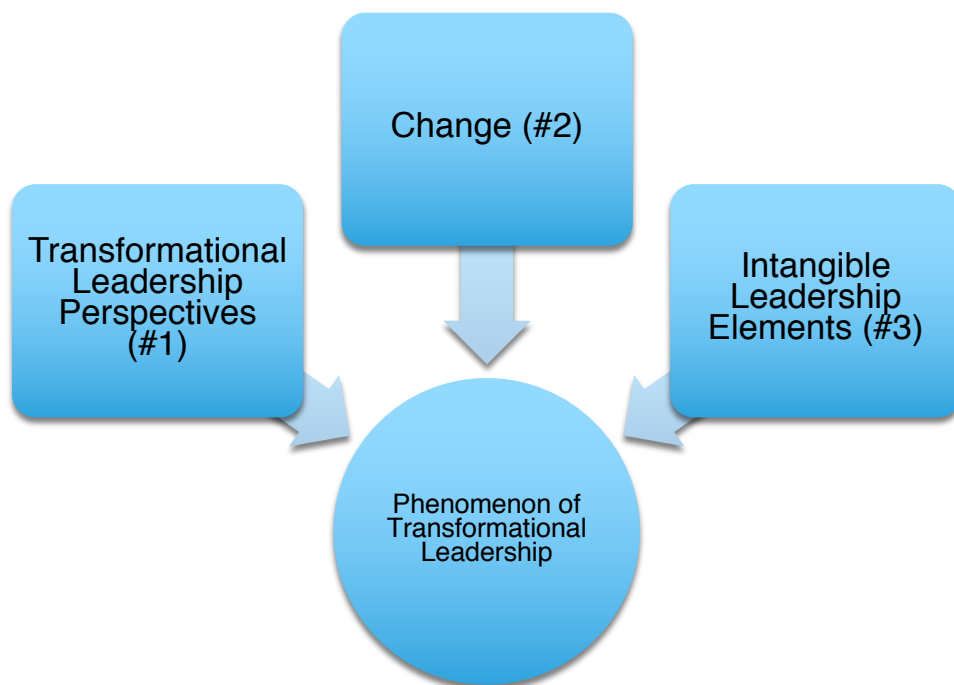


Figure 13. Three finding statements and the phenomenon of transformational leadership.

Conclusion

Through a mixed methods case study design, the researcher gained perspectives of the transformational leadership traits of principal participants. Three finding statements emerged which incorporated several sub-themes. First, the principal participants perceived themselves to exhibit the traits of transformational leadership in their roles within education. Participants were aware of their own perceived transformational leadership traits and believed that they were effectively implementing the traits within their school buildings. Second, participants perceived

the change process to be central to transformational leadership. Third, the intangible elements of transformational leadership were perceived to have an effect on participants' abilities to exhibit effective leadership traits. Further work might be conducted to develop a larger awareness of transformational leadership as an important aspect of administrative programs and principal certification coursework. In addition, future research might pinpoint which traits school leaders spend their time exhibiting and the effects this has on teachers' perceptions of school climate and morale.

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Appendix A:
Superintendent Permission Letter

Department of Education and Educational Psychology
181 White Street Danbury, CT 06810
April 2017

Dear Superintendent:

I am currently enrolled in the doctoral program for Instructional Leadership at Western Connecticut State University. This program requires that I design and implement a dissertation research study. Please accept this letter as my request for your permission to conduct an on-site interview with your building administrator. This research is taking place in the Spring of 2017. The research study has been reviewed and approved by Western Connecticut State University's Institutional Review Board.

The purpose of my research will be to explore transformational leadership practices from the perspectives of principals (both public and private) in Westchester, New York and Fairfield County, Connecticut. Specifically, what are the self-perceptions of building leaders regarding their daily transformational leadership practices? The study will use two data sources of data collection to explore the phenomena.

Online surveys have already been administered. I will conduct one 45-60 minute face-to-face interviews, with your permission, on the school site of the building administrator. This research project has been reviewed and approved by the WCSU Institutional Review Board. If you have questions concerning the rights of the subjects involved in research studies, please contact the WCSU IRB Chair at irb@wcsu.edu and mention Protocol #1617-87. Participation or non-participation in this research will have no adverse effect on you or your school district in any way. If you do agree to allow the interview to take place on-site, you are free to reverse this decision at any time. Privacy will be protected. Participant names will be numerically coded for confidentiality. All participant identities will be maintained in a secure location to protect confidentiality. Results will only be reported in a form that does not identify individuals. The researcher has no supervisory relationship with any of the adult participants.

Any information obtained through this study will remain completely confidential. A copy of this consent form is available for your records. If you have questions about the study, you may contact me at the email listed below. I wish to thank you in advance for permission to conduct a portion of my research within your school building.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Metz

Jody S. Piro, Ed.D.

Associate Professor,

Ed.D in Instructional Leadership

If you agree to allow the interview to take place within the administrators' office, please sign the attached statement below. You may keep the attached copy for your records.

Thank you.

Stephanie Metz, Ed.D Candidate

Instructional Leadership Western Connecticut State University

I, _____, am the superintendent of (school district). I acknowledge that Ms. Metz has made clear to me the purpose of this research, identified any risks involved, and offered to answer any questions. I voluntarily grant permission for this administrator to participate. I have read and understand the above consent form and agree to allow the interview to take place on site.

Printed Name of Superintendent: _____

Signature of Superintendent: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B:

Phase 2 Participant Consent Letter



Phase 2 Participant Consent Letter

Western Connecticut State University
Department Of Education and Educational Psychology
181 White Street
Danbury, CT 06810

Dear Participant,

I am a doctoral candidate enrolled in the Doctor of Education in Instructional Leadership Program at Western Connecticut State University. I am conducting a study for my dissertation research, which will explore school principals' self-perceptions of their transformational leadership style. Please accept this letter as an invitation to participate in Phase 2 of the research study, individual semi-structured interviews.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the transformational leadership qualities that are demonstrated by school principals. At this point, you have already completed a demographic instrument and Leadership Practices Survey. You are being asked to participate in individual interviews as a follow-up to Phase One surveys. These will be administered with open-ended questions to gain a deeper perspective of secondary school leaders leadership styles. The interviews will be recorded with a digital recording device and the website "transcribe.com" will provide the initial transcription of the interviews for the researcher.

The privacy of all participants will be protected throughout the entirety of the study. All information obtained from this study will remain confidential and the results will be shared as a component of the dissertation process. The research findings may be published and presented in academic research settings and potentially incorporated in the Leadership Practices Inventory database by Wiley. The participant names will be coded for confidentiality and stored in a secure location throughout the entirety of the study.

This research project has been reviewed and approved by the WCSU Institutional Review Board. If you have questions about the rights of subjects involved in the research, please contact the WCSU IRB chair at irb@wcsu.edu and mention Protocol #1617-87.

If you have questions about the study, please feel free to contact me at.

Sincerely,

Stephanie M. Metz

Jody Piro, Ed.D.

Printed Name of School Principal: _____

Signature of School Principal: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C:

Phase 2 Participant Consent Letter



Phase 2 Participant Consent Letter

Western Connecticut State University
Department Of Education and Educational Psychology
181 White Street
Danbury, CT 06810

Dear Participant,

I am a doctoral candidate enrolled in the Doctor of Education in Instructional Leadership Program at Western Connecticut State University. I am conducting a study for my dissertation research, which will explore school principals' self-perceptions of their transformational leadership style. Please accept this letter as an invitation to participate in Phase 2 of the research study, individual semi-structured interviews.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the transformational leadership qualities that are demonstrated by school principals. At this point, you have already completed a demographic instrument and Leadership Practices Survey. You are being asked to participate in individual interviews as a follow-up to Phase One surveys. These will be administered with open-ended questions to gain a deeper perspective of secondary school leaders leadership styles. The interviews will be recorded with a digital recording device and the website "transcribe.com" will provide the initial transcription of the interviews for the researcher.

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If you have questions about the study, please feel free to contact me at.

Sincerely,

Stephanie M. Metz

Jody Piro, Ed.D.

Printed Name of School Principal: _____

Signature of School Principal: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D:
Qualitative Audit Samples

How do you praise your faculty for a job well done?

Jason (#24)	<p>Make sure you reread the email you're going to send two or three times to make sure it's saying what you want it to say. If the parent is contentious, you're better off having a face-to-face meeting with them or picking up the phone. Don't put it in email because of FOI.</p> <p>There is a large amount of collaboration between the teachers that doesn't need to be encouraged but it's something that I do encourage.</p>
Lucas (#14)	<p>He tries to use his faculty meetings as the bully pulpit.</p> <p>"Really setting the direction, sharing yourself, what you value, being authentic. It's in the small conversations that you have in the hallways."</p> <p>"Teachers are also taking your measure and how you respond to crises."</p> <p>"It's out there. How do you communicate with staff in a crisis? It all leads to – do they trust you?"</p>
Peggy (#13)	<p>I try to run interference. I look at that as sort of my job. She deals with problematic issues or parents and takes that off of teachers plates. "I take that off their plates because I feel like I need to make sure that they can teach. That's their primary job."</p> <p>We meet weekly so that helps. They come to me and we talk. She is careful about doing too much (meetings and phone calls with parents) because she does not want her teachers to lose their educational control.</p> <p>"So I like them to handle things and then handling as much as possible only because then they're the boss and they're the final word then. Otherwise I feel like my presence there undermines their authority."</p> <p>Team meetings.</p> <p>TOUGH CONVERSATIONS: There's a very high level of respect.</p> <p>Ex: There was a teacher who was intimidating (larger physical presence) to his students. She had to speak with him and set up an action plan. This included "...really informal conversations with them so they can get to know him..."</p>

Appendix E:

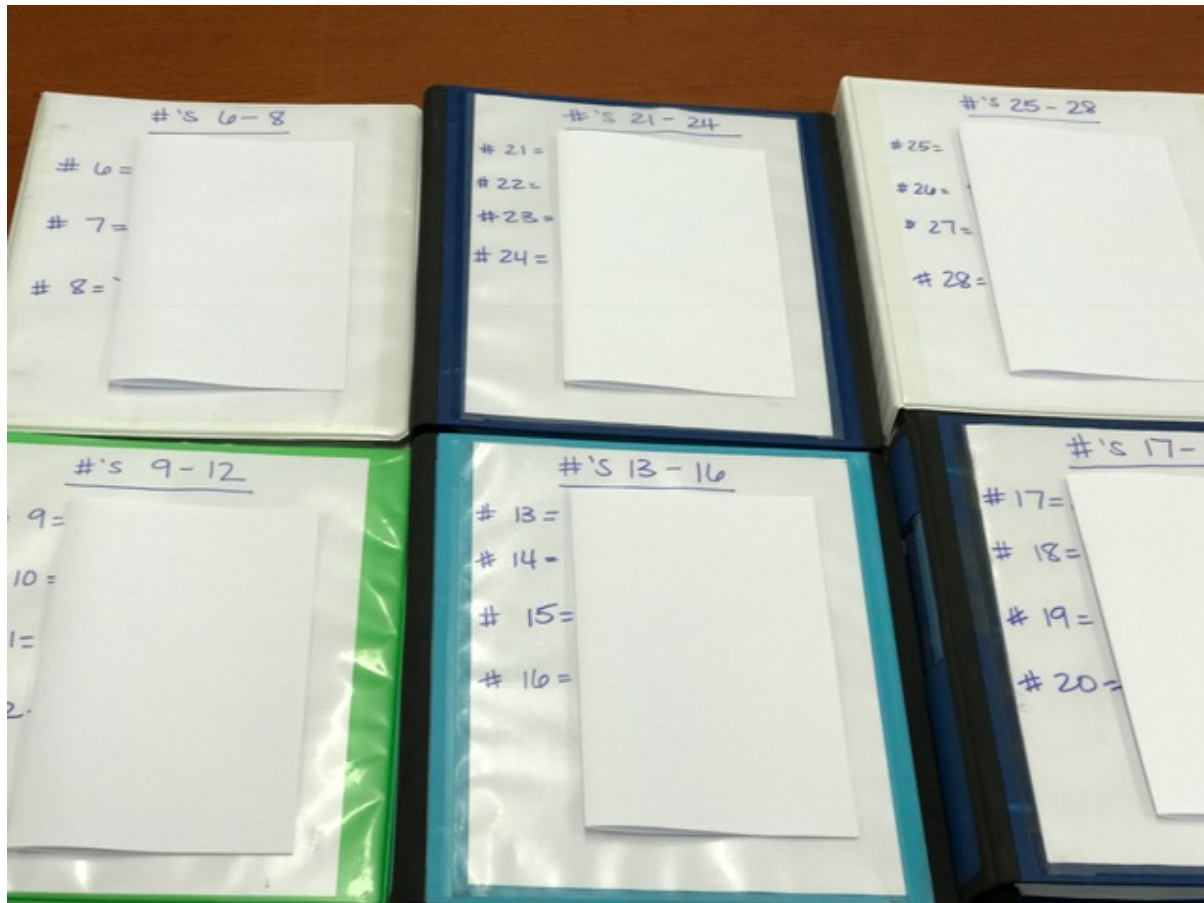
Transformational Leadership Interview Questions

1. Tell me a little bit about your educational background.
2. Please explain the path as to how you became the building leader of your school.
3. What is your definition of transformational leadership?
4. Do you consider yourself a transformational leader?
 - A. How would you describe your transformational leadership?
 - B. What specific traits would help to demonstrate this?
 - C. What reasons do you believe lead you to not envision yourself as a transformational leader?
5. Through what means do you set a positive example for your faculty? (Model)
6. How do you actively articulate your leadership vision to your faculty? (Inspire)
7. In what ways do you work to communicate that vision to your faculty? (Inspire)
8. How do you encourage and support your faculty to take risks and experiments?
(Challenge)
9. What avenues do you incorporate to develop cooperative relationships with your faculty and staff? (Enable)
10. What efforts have you made to praise your faculty for a 'job well done'? (Encourage)
11. How do you follow through on your school wide commitments to your faculty? (Model)
12. How do you work to paint the 'big picture' regarding inspiring a vision of the future?
(Inspire)

13. In what ways do you deal with mistakes or problems, either ones that you or your faculty makes? (Challenge)
14. Can you give an example of an act of respect you have shown to your faculty during this school year? (Enable)
15. As a leader, what steps have you taken to promote a sense of community in your school? (Encourage)
16. Kouzes and Posner believe that leaders must build credibility among their constituents. In what ways do you work to ‘do what you say you will do’ within your building? (Transformational Leadership/Leadership Challenge)
17. Kouzes and Posner (2012) say that leadership is a relationship. How have you worked towards developing positive relationships with your faculty and staff? (Transformational Leadership/Leadership Challenge)
18. In what ways have you asked your faculty for feedback, and what have been the results? (Model)
19. How do you seek out opportunities to challenge and test your own skills and abilities (Challenge)?
20. In your role as building leader, how have you gone about implementing change within your building (Transformational Leadership)?
21. In creating a climate of trust and respect, what steps have you taken to cultivate these in your building? (Enable)
22. What leadership philosophies do you hold at heart in your role as building leader?

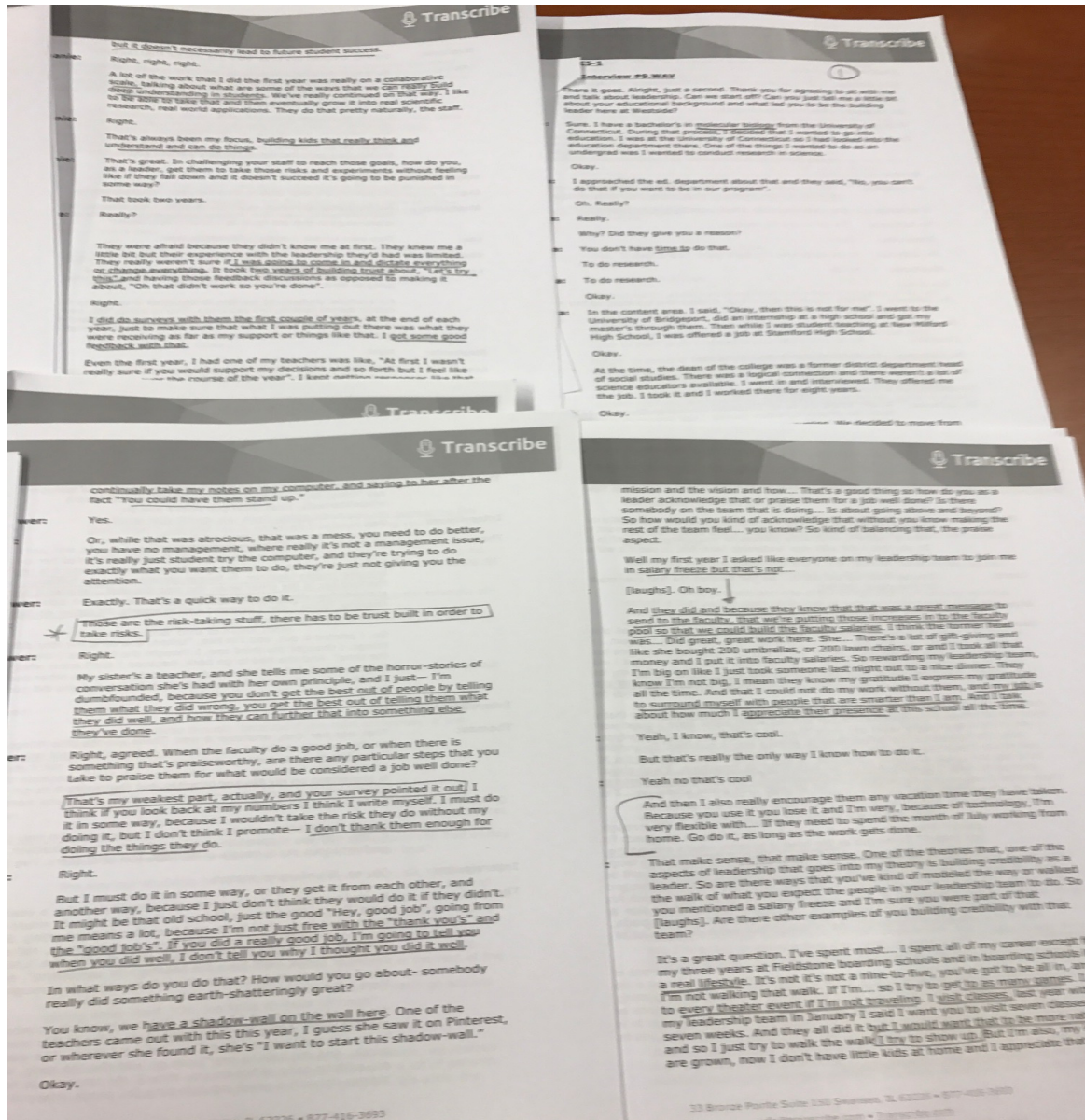
23. As a leader, what steps have you taken to promote a sense of community in your school?
- (Transformational Leadership)
24. How would the faculty in your school describe your leadership style?
25. What are some of the leadership traits you are working to develop?
26. What are some of the ways in which you promote positive internal and external communication within your building?
27. In what ways do you try to set a personal example of what you expect from your faculty?
28. How do you demonstrate your confidence in your faculty to them? Are there different ways in which you attempt to do so?
29. How do you negotiate the daily challenges of balancing all aspects of your school administration responsibilities?
30. In what ways do you actively attempt to bring out the best in your faculty and staff?
31. Was there anything in particular that inspired you to go into school administration?
32. As a leader, I'm sure you have had to work to cultivate relationships with your faculty in the building. Can you provide an example of a time where the relationship you built had a particularly positive impact?
33. Finally, are there any leadership practices in particular which you actively incorporate into your daily school environment?

Appendix F:
Interview Transcripts Organization



Appendix G:

Round One Coding with Pencil



Appendix H:

Round Two (Green) Coding

Oh boy, that's a big one. I guess it's just really that piece of taking a situation at what the situation is, at face value, and not holding on to it forever, because the staff here, I knew you heard that example, they hold on to everything. So with showing my example, I had a situation where I shared some information I really technically wasn't supposed to share. I was asked a question, and I shared some information, and then that person went out, and actually used my name, and said "This is what was happening."

Does this person still work here?

Yes. It just happened, just a couple of weeks ago. I was fit to be tied, like "You came to me and because of our relationship, I shared information." You asked me flat out what was going to happen, and I told you. Normally I wouldn't, I mean those I can't talk about it. Because I trusted you, you went out and told people I'm the one that told you what was happening." I brought a man to have the conversation with him, but you overstepped your bounds. I overstepped my bounds, but if we have trust on, I'm sharing with you. He, and just being clear with him, "I didn't do it."

I said, "I'm not even asking if you did or didn't. I'm telling you, you broke trust with me at this point, and I'm flabbergasted that you even went in this direction. You know, whatever the call conversation was. But it was that kind of sense of the conversation, I can let it go after that. I told you face to face." He's avoided me for three weeks. I've made a purposeful—to go out of my way when I do my building walks and stuff, to make sure I stop in, and see him, because I want him to be able to separate, because he's one of those that can't separate. You did something, I spoke to you, we're done, it's over.

Interviewer: Right. How is that going?

Let's move forward. moving forward

Is he?

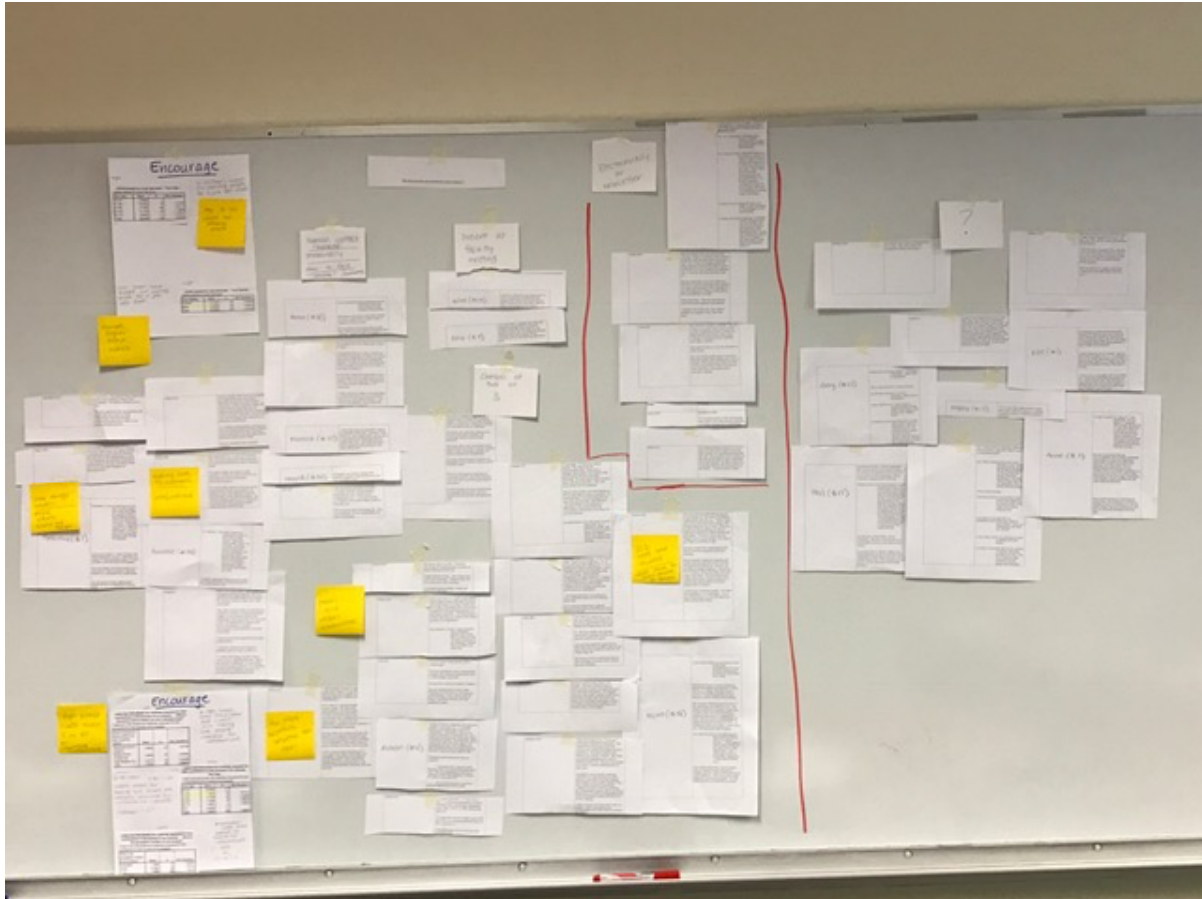
Today was the first day that I actually got to response I used to get. It was "Hey, how's everything going?" I asked about his family, and stuff. Up until then, he wouldn't even look at me. You know. And part of it is his mother used to be our secretary here, so she and I have a very good relationship, which is why I somewhat trusted him with the information, and he used it against me. Anyway, I knew I was going to get the cold shoulder, because I know his mother, and stuff, I know how the family works, the dynamical is, but I just kept chipping away at it. Like I'm just going to keep chipping away, and that's really one of those little ones that's big.

The other pieces, professional learning communities— this district is big about not coming together for any committee, any meeting that's not contractually obligated. The thought of having a group of teachers coming here before school, or stay after school on a day other than a Wednesday, when contractually they have to stay for an hour, is

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face value
letting go
this
TRUST
communicate +
common
relationship
building
TRUST
resolution
Interviewer:
r:
TRUST
relationship
building

Appendix I: Coding Wall

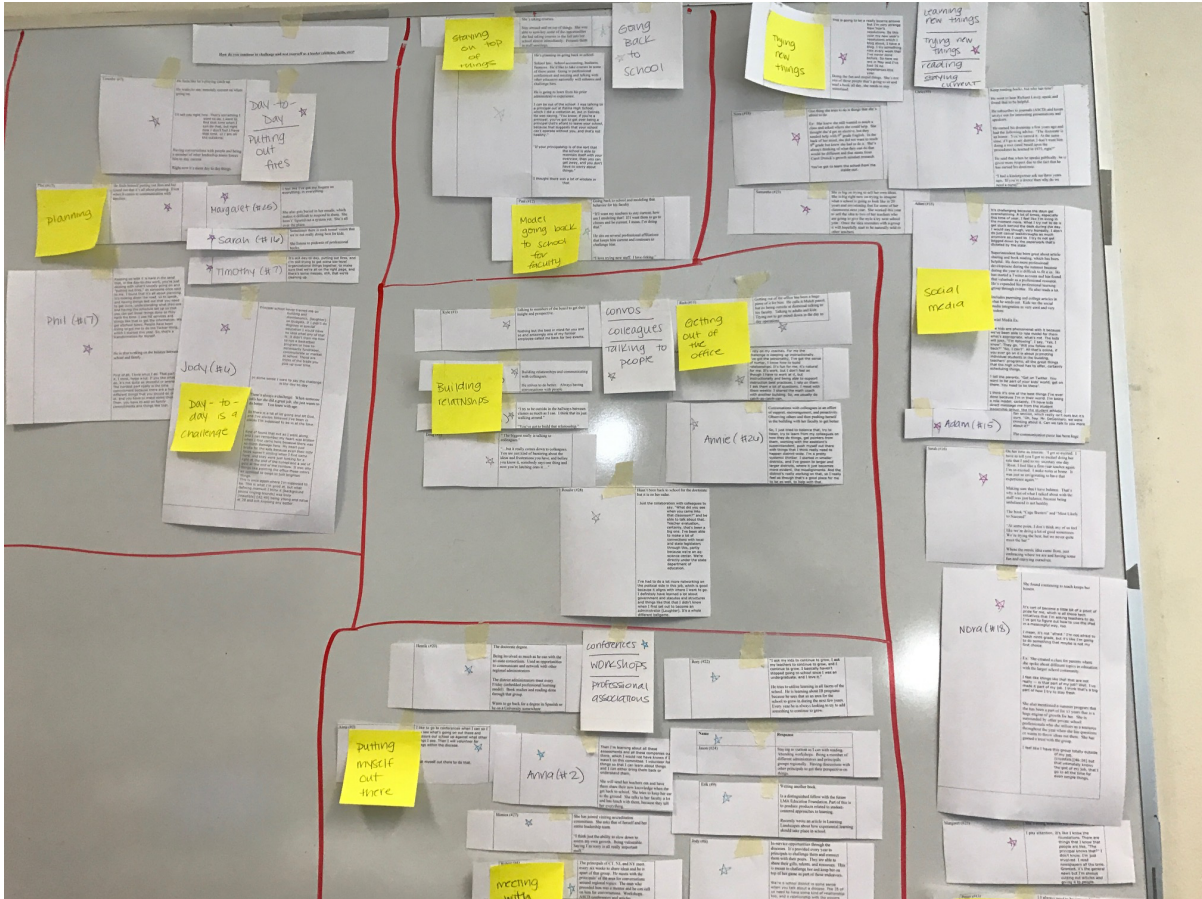


Appendix J:

Interview Question: What was your vision as you began your role or career?

Sub-Theme	Human Element	
Coding Category	Human Element	Bigger Picture
	Openness /Build Relationships <i>Samantha, Jessica, Nora, Phil, Timothy, Rich, Doug, Monica, Anna, Jody, Erik, Rory, Jessica</i>	School Vision/Mission <i>Chris, Kyle, Lucas, Nora, Margaret, Henrik</i>
	Convos/Communication <i>Samantha, Gary, Paul, Nora, Phil, Timothy, Rich, Doug, Monica, Peggy, Anna, Vinny, Robert, Jody, Erik, Rory, Jessica, Anna</i>	Communicated <i>Jason, Kyle, Annie, Nora, Margaret, Rich, Henrik, Adam</i>
	Listen and Learn <i>Jessica, Nora, Rosalie, Peggy, Anna, Vinny, Robert, Jody, Erik, Rory, Jessica</i>	School Culture <i>Chris, Jason, Lucas, Annie, Rich, Henrik, Adam</i>
	Respect/Trust <i>Gary, Jessica, Nora, Monica, Rosalie, Doug, Peggy, Anna, Vinny, Jody, Erik, Rory, Jessica</i>	Building Relationships/Trust <i>Chris, Jason, Lucas, Annie, Rich, Henrik, Adam</i>
	Collaboration <i>Samantha, Gary, Jessica, Nora, Rosalie, Phil, Timothy, Doug, Monica, Peggy, Vinny, Robert, Erik, Rory, Anna</i>	
	Model the Behavior <i>Samantha, Paul, Nora, Peggy, Anna, Robert, Jody, Erik,</i>	

Appendix K: Qualitative Coding



Appendix L:

Leadership Demographic Information Instrument

Please respond to the questions below.

1. Your age...?

(21-30) (31-40) (41-50) (51-60) (61-70) (70+)

2. Educational Job Title: _____

3. How long have you worked in the education field? _____

4. How long have you been a school administrator (total number of years)? _____

5. Gender: Male Female

6. Highest Degree Earned...?

Bachelor's Master's Master's + Doctorate Doctorate +

7. Is your school...?

Public Private/Independent

8. What is the school level in which you are a building leader?

Pre-K to Elementary Middle High
(Pre-K-5) (6-8) (9-12)

9. What is the approximate size of your school? (need specific numbers)

Small Medium Large
(under 100) (100-300) (300 and above)

10. What is the geographic location of your school?

Rural Suburban Urban

Appendix M:
LPI Written Question Permission

Apr 3

Metz, Stephanie

to Ellen

Good Morning Ellen,

I hope this email finds you well. I am following up with you regarding my dissertation document. I used the LPI survey to conduct Phase 1 of my research study. As part of my analysis, I determined which prompts scored the highest and lowest based on the individual question. Is it possible for me to state the survey questions in my dissertation write up to correspond with the results?

Please let me know how best to proceed. Thanks for your time. I look forward to sharing the finished document with you before the school year ends!

Take Care,

Stephanie Metz

Ellen Peterson

Apr 5

to me

Hello Stephanie,

I checked with the publishing company and they see no issue with this so go ahead.

Kind regards,
Ellen

**Edd in Instructional Leadership
Department of Education and Educational Psychology
Dissertation Registration Form**

Student: Stephanie M. Metz

Date: April 27, 2018

Dissertation Title: The Self-Perceptions of Principals' Transformational Leadership Practices

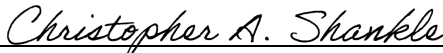
Dissertation Committee Members: See attached Dissertation Approval Page

For Office Use Only.

Jody S. Piro, EdD	Jody S. Piro	May 16, 2017
Primary Advisor	Signature	Date

Marcia A. B. Delcourt, PhD		June 28, 2018
Program Coordinator	Signature	Date

Maryann Rossi, PhD		July 2, 2018
Dean, School of Professional Studies	Signature	Date

Christopher Shankle, EdD		3 July 2018
Associate Director, Division of Graduate Studies	Signature	Date